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#12



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**—Guillermo del Toro**  
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ON THE COVER: Michael Myers stalks our cover by Ed Ripka

**THIS ISSUE:** Vestron Video established itself as one of the leading video companies of the 1980s, only to go bankrupt and eventually become a distant memory for horror fans today. Who was this important VHS distributor, and what effect did they have on the market as we know it today? We take a peek into the past with our first segment in a new series entitled Video Invasion: Remembering the VHS Boom, on page 18.

The Giallo is a long stoned genre of success, having launched the celebrity of such directors as Mario Bava and Dario Argento. What is Giallo, and how has it influenced modern horror? How did it help spawn the '80s slasher boom, and how is it responsible for the boogeyman we know as Michael Myers? Find out on page 24.

For thirty years Michael Myers has stalked the town of Haddonfield, tracking down his little sister and leaving a path of violent deaths in his wake. Our *HorrorHound* Retrospective this issue is a doozy, covering the history of Michael, from his introduction in the 1978 slasher hit, *Halloween*, to his recent revival in the Rob Zombie-directed remake. We tell the story of this madman in a twelve-page guide to all things *Halloween*. This is the largest collection of rare publicity photos and posters, action figures, masks, and all that other good stuff us *HorrorHounds* can't stop collecting. If you missed our *Helldozer* or *Child's Play* Retrospect, turn to page 28 to see the kind of insane attention to detail you missed out on, then visit [www.horrorhound.com](http://www.horrorhound.com) today and pick up those missing issues! As mentioned above, the Giallo is responsible for the slasher subgenre, one that exploded in the 1980s. On page 42 we take a look at the unsung heroes of that era, in our guide to the twenty most underrated slashers of the '80s! From *Madman* to *The Burning*, find out if your favorite film made the "cut".

Horror movie news is dry this month, with notable releases being reserved for Indiana Jones and Batman during these summer months. We do, however, discuss the upcoming *Hellboy* sequel and the next *Alexandre Aja* feature, *Mirrors* as well as the new TV series *Fear Itself*, as part of our movie news. With the revelation of *Killer Klowns* from *Cutter Space* in toy news to Martin's Hall of Fame induction on page 63, this is one of our best issues yet!

July/August 2008

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VIDEO!



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# LETTERS

We are very excited about this issue you are currently reading! The staff at HorrorHound have an amazing variety of letters derived from this great genre. Some writers are hardcore into classic horror ranging from Universal's hey day to Ed Wood schlock. '50s sci-fi action fiction monster movies to the great Hammer and Amicus ultra releases... some are dedicated to the art of Fido or Argento. Giallo, Italian horror cinema, or the recent *J-horror* and French cinema booms. While others reserve their love for pop culture stasher films which blossomed in the '90s. No matter what our current infatuation are, every staffer was fed a steady diet of the letter example of horror goodness, consistently reviewing the latest bloodbaths available at our local "mom and pop" video stores. This issue is dedicated to that long-lost business. From the creation of Michael Myers (especially the last great *Giallo* killer) to the '50s boom of slashers and VHS compars, this issue's theme is loud and clear, and sets a standard for issues to come. On page 16, you will find an article entitled *Video Invasion: Remembering the VHS Boom*. This is a new recurring article that will focus on the companies of the past that celebrated (and sometimes exploited) the genre during this era. We start out modestly with *Vector Video*, and in the coming months you will see delirious "halley looms" or the other companies who helped make the industry the scary monster it is today. On page 42, we even celebrate the memorable titles of the '50s with our controversial guide to the twenty most underrated slashers! We had fun making it and we hope you have fun reading it!

Nathan Hanneman  
Editor-in-Chief, HorrorHound

Hi, first off I just wanted to let you know your magazine looks awesome (in case you didn't know). From your toy news and retrospectives to Horror's Hallowed Grounds, it's all awesome! I really enjoy Finken's as well. I just wanted to send you a couple of photos of my *House of a Thousand Corpses* cover-top back piece and my Vincent Price tattoos. They were done by a really awesome artist, Heather McLean of Strange World Tattoo here in Calgary. Thanks for your time and keep the horror comin'!

Lee Palschuk

Let me start with this. HorrorHound is by far the best horror magazine I have read. You have great articles and you cover everything I love about horror. I have enjoyed every issue so far, but issue #11 was the best. While all of it was great it was your *GenreHound* section that excited me most, and made this the best issue so far! While reading this issue I was smiling the whole time because, like Larry Newman, I had fond memories of when I would walk into my small town video store. When I was like ten, I'd walk over to the horror section and look at the cool box art on all the horror

movies. Of all the cool boxes (Pumpkinhead being another memorable one), *Melvin* always caught my attention. It was a simple cover, but it stayed in my mind, and of course the title. I was thirteen-years-old before I saw the film, as I had thought I was then old enough to see anything I wanted. I had seen the "Friday," the "Nightmares," and the "Halloween," and I loved them all, but *Melvin* was the one that I liked the most. There's a lot to say on all of this, but I'll stop there and just thank you for a great article and giving an overlooked movie the spotlight for awhile. Keep it up. You continue to amaze me. Thank!

Chad Harty

What a fantastic magazine you have! I enjoy each article and love the pictures! Your article on *Ghostbusters: The Video Game* was a fun read. My group, HPI (Haunted and Paranormal Investigations International), will be purchasing this game. When we are not truly ghostbusting, we will relax and enjoy this game! Paul Date Roberts, *Ghostbusters/Ghostwriter*



I love your magazine! When I was reading the *Remembering Chad's Play* article, I noticed that you indicated that Jennifer Tilly won an Oscar for *Bullets Over Broadway*. She was nominated for best supporting actress for her role in that film. She lost, however, to her costar Diane West. I'm not trying to pes anyone off here, I'm just pointing out this error to you. Once again, I love this magazine, and I'll keep reading no matter what!! Reader for life, Rob McGregor, Burnsville, Minnesota



**WIN COOL PRIZES!** Starting next issue, we will be giving away special prizes for our "Letter of the Month." Just send us your cool letter post, fan artwork, questions, comments, movie reviews, or your musings about the industry and/or HorrorHound Magazine. Anything you think we would post and the rest of the world would want to read! To start things off we will be giving away random horror shirts from the good folks at *Nordst!r's Cool Clothing!* E-mail us your letters today at [mail@horrorhound.com](mailto:mail@horrorhound.com) or via snail-mail using the address located at the right, then visit *Nordst!r* online at [www.nordst.com](http://www.nordst.com)! Good luck and remember to Feed the Beast! TELL YOUR FRIENDS!



# HORRORHOUND

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**Know Your HorrorHound** Jessica Bruwer (Proof Writer)  
**What do I do at HorrorHound?** Being the proof writer, my focus is to prevent spelling and grammatical errors from making it into print. It's a tedious and thankless job, but someone needs to keep these books in check.  
**The first horror movie I ever watched** I am not sure which came first, but I remember loving *Swamp Thing* and *Pollanor*. I watched them both over and over again on HBO as a kid. But the movie that scared me for life was *The Shining*. It's still creepy as all get out.  
**What do I collect?** Elvis, Hello Kitty, snow globes, records, '80s toys, Japanese Lucky Cats, Schitz Beer memorabilia, Horries, Barbie Page and girly stuff (purses, shoes, handbags).  
**My favorite movie** I hate questions like this, because I can't pick just one. Some of my faves are *The Royal Tenenbaums*, *My True Romance*, *American Psycho*, *Cry-Baby* and *Tombsville*.  
**Best part of going to horror cons** Visiting with friends and meeting fans. Oh! And the shopping! (See my new propeller belt in I found at the recent Ontario Weekend?)

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## a quick word with DOUG JONES!

**HorrorHound** After four years, how was it to step into Abe Sapien's flippers again?

**Doug Jones:** Getting back into Abe again was like revisiting an old friend that I hadn't seen or talked to in a while. We did the animated features I was able to voice Abe for, and we did the video game. So there have been snippets that involved the franchise, but getting into the make-up again and having a story to play out on film... it was a family affair.

**HR:** Doing the cartoons, how much of an adjustment was it compared to all the physicality of your on-screen acting to just do voice work?

**DJ:** I had a ball with them. It was different knowing that the visual performance of this character was going to be rendered later, but finding Abe's verbal voice again was kind of second nature (Doug's voice of Abe was redubbed with *Frasier* star David Hyde Pierce in the original film).

**HR:** How much more screen time does Abe receive this time around since he's got the jump-stick and the breathing apparatus?

**DJ:** Oh, I can't even tell you how much more. By means of comparison, in the first film I was working in make-up 17 days out of the entire shoot, in the second movie, I worked 108 days in make-up the entire shoot. So you can count on a lot more screen time. That 108 days includes the Chamberlain and The Angel of Death (which Doug also played), about a week of that. I love the Angel of Death character. It's just loaded with substance and intrigue; you're scratching your head with the possibilities of seeing her again. But the obstacle that came with that, of course, was the weight of the wings. Those big beautiful wings are mechanical, they're not CG. And all the eyes that are in the wings are all mechanically operated by puppeteers.

**HR:** What are your thoughts on CG and the great director, Guillermo del Toro?

**DJ:** That's what I love about Guillermo del Toro as a director, he is so good... he loves the golden era of filmmaking so much. If you can film it practically on-set that's the preferred method for him. It shouldn't be a full replacement without trying to get it on film first, and I love him for that. As an audience member, I like to connect to the humanity behind these characters.

**HR:** Guillermo del Toro has been said to have an idea for the third film in the franchise that has the BPRD fighting the Universal Monsters. Doug Jones could not confirm this, however, when asked if he could pick a Universal Monster to play if it does get made, he chose the Mummy. But he agrees that a fight between Abe Sapien and the Creature from The Black Lagoon would be EPIC! Doug will be signing autographs during the *HorrorHound* Weekend convention in Indianapolis, IN (his home state) during the weekend of August 29-31st. For more information visit [www.horrorhoundweekend.com](http://www.horrorhoundweekend.com) today!

Horror and comic books go hand in hand. Heroes in these comics tend to be handsome types like Blade or hotties like Cassie in *Hack/Slash*. But there's not many who can match the character Mike Mignola created back in 1993 named Hellboy. He's the monster and the hero... and he's a hit with the ladies. Hellboy was brought to earth by the Nazis near the end of WW2, and was saved from the dubious plans they had for him by Allied Forces. Raised within the halls of the "Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense," Hellboy chose to fight the evils that sought to destroy mankind; the same creatures that he himself was born a kin to.

The comic book series became very popular, its success grew with each new mini-series run. Hellboy's supporting cast of so-called "breeks" came to be favorites among comic book fans and horror fans alike. Abe Sapien, Hellboy's half-fish half-man friend and fellow member of the "BPRD" as well as pyrokinetic Liz Sherman



were two of the more popular members of the series. The BPRD actually received its own spin-off series, and Abe Sapien more recently had his own mini-series entitled "The Drowning." Paperback novels, video games, and role-playing games followed, and eventually Hollywood beckoned for "Big Red" and company to come and grace the big screen.

In 2004, Mexican filmmaker Guillermo del Toro co-wrote and directed the first live-action version of Hellboy. It starred genre favorite Ron Perlman in the lead, a role he was seemingly born to play. Doug Jones portrayed Abe in a graceful performance that was later-voiced by an uncredited David Hyde Pierce. Liz Sherman was played by Selma Blair and John Hurt was cast as Hellboy's adoptive father Professor Broom. The film did decent box office numbers and culled even better DVD sales, with a special director's edition released loaded with extras. Fans of the series loved it as it stayed true to the characters and the vision that they saw in the pages of the comic. Even closer to the comic in appearance were the direct-to-DVD films *Sword of Storms* and *Blood and Iron*. Following the live-action film's



home video success, IDT Entertainment decided to produce animated films based on the Hellboy universe. For the films, del Toro's "crew" voiced their respective characters, all except for David Hyde Pierce; now Abe Sapien was voiced by the man who was under his skin, actor Doug Jones.

The animated films kept the look of Mignola's comics and the supernatural baddies the BPRD faced, such as vampires and spints. It also brought in other characters from the series, such as Professor Kate Corrigan.

It wasn't long until fans wanted more Hellboy in theaters, and this year they will get their wish when *Hellboy 2: The Golden Army*, his theaters this July 11th. Directed and written once again by Guillermo del Toro, *The Golden Army* picks up where the first film left off with Liz and Hellboy having a rough time of it in the relationship department. Things only get worse when an elf prince decides he's had it with the world of humans and decides to go to war with mankind. The original cast (sans Rupert Evans, who portrayed John Myers and had a "scheduling conflict") returns with Jones doing triple duty, not only as Abe, but also in the roles of The Angel of Death and a character known as The Chamberlain.

Along with the previous film's cast are few more notable characters. Johann Kraus, a character from the comic book series, is now a member of the team. Kraus is mostly ectoplasm in a containment suit. He's also being voiced by Seth McFarlane, who most people know as the man behind Fox's *The Family Guy*. Luke Goss, who starred in del Toro's entry in the Blade franchise as the cursed vampire Nomak, plays Prince Nuada, the instigator of the war and a betrayer of both humanity and his own father, King Balor. Balor, it should be mentioned, is portrayed by Roy Dotrice who co-starred with Perlman in the late '80s fantasy series *Beauty*



and The Beast as Vincent's Father. With a year filled with so many comic book movies, it's good to know that the horror genre is being represented so good. So pump your "Right Hand of Doom" into the air and whoop for joy, Hellboy's back!

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## Looking Inside MIRRORS

by Jessica Dwyer



Kiefer Sutherland looks for answers within the Mirrors.

Five years ago a movie burst onto the international scene that brought the bite back to horror. The movie was *Hillbilly* and it was one of the bloodiest and most visceral films to be seen in years. The story tells of friends, Mame and Alexa, who are visiting Alexa's family. What happens next is a terrifying descent into madness as a brutal killer slaughters Alexa's entire family and kidnaps her, leaving Mame to follow after her friend. The film's ending was shocking and left audiences stunned. The man responsible for this horror wasn't even thirty-years-old when the film was released in his native France. His name is Alexandre Aja and he is a member of that new guard of horror, "The Splatter Pack," or whatever you want to call them. Aja both wrote and directed the film and continued to do double duties on his next film, the remake of Wes Craven's cult classic *The Hills Have Eyes*. Writing the screenplay with his partner, Gregory Levasseur, Aja's film was starkly beautiful and unrelenting in its brutality. It took Craven's ideas and pushed them to the limit. The cannibalistic family was now a group of mutated monsters caused by nuclear radiation, their victim's deaths were extreme, and by the end of the film you feel like you've been through the ordeal yourself. With make-up effects by KNS EFX and a cast that included film and genre legends Robert Joy and Ted Levine, "*Hills*" was a return to the old school horror of the '70s with a modern style that melded into a great piece of cinema. Aja followed up *Hills* by writing the screenplay for the 2007 thriller *P2* about a security guard who traps a young businesswoman inside a parking garage with him over Christmas Eve. The two play a game of cat and mouse over the course of the film as she tries to escape. This time Aja and his writing partner, Gregory Levasseur, had help in the screenplay department, co-writing with Franck Khalfoun, who went on to direct the film.

This year Alexandre Aja is back in the director's chair and once again co-writing with Levasseur. The film is called *Mirrors*, and it promises to be one of the best horror movies of the year. The story centers on Ben Carson, played by Kiefer Sutherland. Ben is an ex-police officer who has taken the job of night watchman at a burned out department store. Strange things begin to happen as people's reflections show them committing horrible acts, which then happen in reality. There is very little revealed about the plot, as Alexandre Aja remains very hush about the details.

The creep factor is high in the film. *Mirrors* themselves are inherently creepy, with many legends and myths regarding them, such as Bloody Mary, "Seven Years," Dracula's reflection (or lack thereof), etc. But there's also that uncertainty, am I looking back at myself? What would happen if one day I turned away and my reflection still stood, watching me as I leave the room. These questions and more come into play in *Mirrors*. The film itself has been touted as a remake of a Korean film entitled *Into the Mirror*, but that's actually not entirely true. Aja wasn't happy with the remake script he was initially given, so he decided to do a complete rewrite from page one. "It was right after the release of *The Hills Have Eyes*, and I was looking for my next project," the director says, "Wondering if I wanted to make the sequel to *Hills*, or if I wanted to do something completely different. For a long time I wanted to explore the other side of the genre, the supernatural side. I was looking for material about that, so New Regency and Fox sent me a script that was titled *Into The Mirror* that was based on the movie. I didn't know anything about the movie or the fact that [the script] was based on the movie." He explains, "I didn't really connect with the story, but I did connect with the concept of the mirrors, and the idea that we are living in a world where mirrors are everywhere, from the reflection on the TV screen to the building outside, in the car. They are everywhere. We are looking at ourselves so many times during the day without even meaning to; just accidentally looking at our reflection. And we all

have that kind of fear or care about did anything change? And I was looking for that fear that we all have in real life, something using the supernatural story. I realized that no one before had made a movie about our relationship with the mirrors."

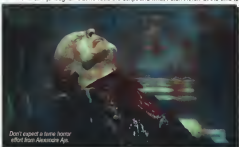
"I thought it was an interesting subject and topic," Aja says, "So I went back to Fox and said 'I didn't connect to the script at all, I didn't connect to the character, the storyline, or the scares. I want to do something completely different.' They asked me to watch the Korean movie, but it was the same thing. I didn't connect with the movie overall, but I did connect with the opening scene, and some of the scenes along the story, which were so great because they were showing something that nobody can imagine which was what if tomorrow mirrors showed us something we're not supposed to see? And that was for me the start of making *Mirrors*. So I went back to the studio, started from page one, and wrote another script based on the concept that the Korean movie invented."

As said, the film deals with many aspects of what mirrors represent and what they mean to us. And of course that dredges up that highest of sins: vanity. Does *Mirrors* give a sort of anti-Sex and *The City* vibe and deliver a cautionary message about vanity? What happens to a place like a Saks 5th Ave or a Macy's which becomes a sort of shrine to advance and the need to be more beautiful? *Mirrors* answers that question.

"There is a lot of that there," Aja says, "It starts with you looking at yourself and then it goes into a real story, with a real investigation, with a real plot. The story is following Kiefer Sutherland who is playing an ex-cop who's taking a job as a night watchman in a department store that burned down. And that place that burned down was sort of like the temple to vanity. There are mirrors everywhere, and you are here to buy and buy and buy. The mirrors are here to make them feel pretty, most of the time they are made cheated so you look more thin or whatever. In that place Kiefer is going to deal with his own demons somehow, and starts to believe these things." He continues, "It's going to be a full supernatural rollercoaster for him and these mirrors are going to take over his life. That's the plot that we were trying to develop with that script."

Speaking of Kiefer Sutherland, this is the first true horror film he's done since *Flatliners*. What was it like to work with the man that everyone now knows as Jack Bauer, but so many horror fans will always know as David the vampire? "That's really the reason I thought of him night away because I'm a huge fan of *Flatliners* even more so than *Lost Boys*," Aja says, "And I'm also a big fan of 24, but I've been watching 24 for years, and I'm like, 'I would so like Kiefer to come back to the genre.' And even when he was doing little supporting parts in *Freeway* or *Dark City*, he was so interesting and fresh and a great character actor. So yeah, working with him was one of my two best experiences working with actors."

The director adds about working with Kiefer, "It was just fantastic. When he read the script it took a while, but not because he wasn't connecting with the movie, because doing 24 throughout the year was taking a lot of time. It's like if you were shooting twelve feature films a year. So I was thinking maybe for the two or three months a year he's not shooting, he wants to take a holiday and not shoot a feature film with me." Aja laughs. "But he read the script and what I didn't know at the time is



Don't expect a true horror effort from Alexandre Aja.

that Kiefer has big trouble with mirrors. In his place, he'll have one mirror and that's it. He hates looking at himself. He'll never look at the video assist; he'll never look at the dailies. He has a very troubled relationship with his own image. It's a very interesting thing and I think that's why he connects with the script. He already had that relationship with the mirrors. So when we met, he told me 'I cannot stop thinking about that script. I read it and all the reflections, and all the vanity, and all the mirrors. I have a



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## GENTLE GIANT



## the RISE of a HORROR LEGEND

The horror genre in itself has been a fascination of mine from early childhood. From watching my first slasher flick to believing that Freddy might actually come to me in a nightmare, I have always loved the feelings and thrills I get when I watch a good horror film. Justin Simmons says of his love for the genre: Having personally been involved in the culture for over fifteen years, Justin began selling horror related items through eBay where he was able to achieve the site's ultimate status as a power seller. Having felt that he wasn't reaching enough of the horror community with constant eBay fees eating away at many customers, he wanted to create a service for horror fans to use, something free, and with customer support. He created HorrorId.com.



"When I finally ended my eBay account to concentrate on HorrorId full time, I had over 14,000 positive feedbacks under the name BookAuditions. Out of all the customers, I had served only seven had negative reviews."

With the recent trend in online auction fees skyrocketing, Justin knew he wanted to do something special for the community that he had come to know and love. Thus the phone for HorrorId.com went out in motion. A friend of Justin's, Joel Forner, whom he has known since the first grade, picked up the phone and moved from Virginia Beach back home to Indiana just to work on the site. The site is still being refitted to optimize the auction software and make it as easy as possible to buy and sell. "Our goal is to provide an alternative to your typical auction site, a place where you won't have to spend hours searching for that perfect costume or movie you have been looking for," Justin adds. "eBay is without a doubt the 700 pound gorilla in the room and to ignore it or to try to compete head on with it would be a lost cause. But with a lot of customer support to ridiculous high fees, we feel that we can provide a trading experience without all the red tape and frustration eBay sometimes causes. Oh, did we mention it's free?" Try it out today for yourself by logging on at [www.HorrorId.com/](http://www.HorrorId.com/)

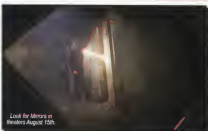


feeling that I'm already in the movie.' So it was already a very strong and deep relationship between the two of us on making that movie," Apa continues. "And he was really here to protect the movie. We were really here to make the best movie possible. The studio is a little bit scared to go too far with the graphic violence or they're a little bit scared about going too far with the intellectual fear. It's always like they want to stay a little bit in the mainstream. With the help of Kiefer, we did the movie we wanted."

Filming took place in both Romania and the US, the reason was simple, Apa needed a HUGE building to represent the burned-out store. "The decision was to find a department store that was a huge set." He explains, "It was one of the biggest sets we've ever had. It was this huge amazing place, we wanted to find something that was the size of Macy's. It's impossible to build such a big place on stage. I remember from a previous movie that Buchanar had gigantic buildings that were never finished from the time of Ceausescu, when he was trying to build this megalomaniac town. Huge buildings everywhere, and then the revolution came, and he died before finishing everything. So there are huge empty and unfinished buildings everywhere. I remembered in Buchanar these very interesting academy of science, library, structures that are bigger than anything you can imagine and completely abandoned." He says, "So we went over there and took over one of these places, and turned it into this huge burned out department store in New York City. The idea was to do all of the inside shots over there in Eastern Europe, and then come back to the States and do all of the outside."

But what was it like filming something like *Mirrors*? *Mirrors* in film land to be a director's worst enemy, causing problems with lighting or possibly catching the reflection of crew members or boom mics. When a film centers on one of the trickiest parts of filmmaking, you have to expect a challenge. "It was very difficult," Apa explains, "even someone looking at his own reflection, if you want the straight look, looking into his eyes. You have the reflection of the camera; you have the reflection of the crew. In this movie we are not dealing with one mirror; we are dealing with all the mirrors that you can imagine. Starting from the water to the windows, the rearview mirrors in the car; everything you can imagine. We have a whole collection of mirrors and reflective surfaces. Also the movie is called *Mirrors* so people have to be very careful of what is seen in the reflections." He says, "We didn't want to get into all the CG, we are creating everything. So it was very tricky for the DP, the producer and I, and everyone... we find great solutions every time. We do a lot of storyboards and simulations. One of the key scenes of the movie is taking place on the set in what we call the mirror room. It is a room which is all mirrors, the ceiling, everywhere. We knew that we had a lot of scenes taking place there and they were very important. It was going to be impossible to step into the room and shoot from inside, we had to figure out another way to build that entire room in two way mirrors so we could stay outside. That was the biggest one."

It sounds like Apa and his team were up to the challenge. But can we expect more of that beautiful brutality that we saw in the *Hills* remake? "I'm working with the same people," Apa says. "The same producer, the same co-writer Gregory Levasseur, the same DP, and the same editor, we are really like a team together. But the thing is, I really love what you described: beautiful brutality. I like when we are with characters, we scare with them and we fear with them. And when



Look for *Mirrors* in theaters August 15th.

the violence comes in a very brutal and graphic way, but at the same time it's built to the style of the movie. But yes, *Mirrors* will be in the same vein, and I think we have three or four scenes that go even further."

Alexander Apa is one of the new breed of horror directors. As stated before, he is a member of the so-called Splat Pack. He's not afraid to push the limits and he's more than happy to be a part of the gang who makes up the "Splat Pack." "I respect all of them," he says, "Devil's Rejects is one of my favorite movies. The thing is, I'm not living in the States. I spend a lot of my time in Europe or in France, and I go back and forth. I've never met them. We exchange e-mails and we have a lot of common friends, we are a group of people that know each other's work, but don't know each other personally. I know we respect each other very much. Someone decided to put us together and give us a name. Why not? It's fun. I think it shows something else," he says, "something the same that is for all of us. We're all the same generation, and we all grew up being very frustrated looking at the late '80s and the '90s horror movies where everything was very soft, very ironic and not very scary anymore. I think we all wanted to come back to that '70s/beginning of the '80s Texas Chainsaw Massacre, *Maniac*, *The Shining* kind of films." That's what made us part of the same group, all of us making straight-in-your-face horror movies." Apa isn't apologetic about his method or what he is trying to get on the screen. Horror is horror and it shouldn't be neutered down. The delight of PG13 horror films doesn't make him happy, and he wants to make sure people know that even though *Mirrors* is supernatural, it is not to be confused with the other supernatural horror films of late. "For me the biggest problem is that *Mirrors* is a supernatural movie and most of the movies that pretend to be horror movies and are PG13... 99% of them are that kind of movie." He says, "That really hurts me in a way... I'm not going to repeat the titles of all of them, but most of all the supernatural movies that I saw over the last three years, I don't know why [the audience] would go see *Mirrors* because they would be annoyed by all these movies. That's really bad because I know *Mirrors* is completely different." Apa explains, "I know it's much more scary, it's a real R rated movie. It's a movie we tried to create in the vein of *The Shining*. It's something so completely different and that makes much more of a use of the mirror than any a cell phone, TV, videotape, or any other device. Mankind's history can be told through the story of the mirror and reflection from the story of Narcissus and Greek mythology through today from the Twin Towers mirrors. *Mirrors* is more different than all the other ones, much more different."

Support local horror and go see *Mirrors* when it is released on August 15th here in the States. And if you are planning on going to Comic-Con this year, be sure to look for Alexander Apa who will be attending to promote the film.

GHASTLY



NO. 1



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# FEATURING

by Nathan Hanneman

**Mystery Science Theater 3000** is one of the most beloved (and hated) television

series of the last twenty years. The show ran from 1985 to 1999, when it was cancelled thanks to mounting difficulties in obtaining cheap film rights for television and cable network usage. A feature film based on the series was released in 1996, its DVD release later became a hot commodity for fans of the show (and fans of the digital format). The out-of-print disc became elusive, and soon copies of the film fetched upwards of (and beyond) \$100 on secondary markets. Rhino Home Video's box-set DVD releases of the show's episodes have been a hit with fans, although licensing rights have caused some friction on those titles as well, resulting in out-of-print titles, again, fetching top dollar on eBay. Now that we are half-way through 2006, it is with excitement that the crew of the "Satellite of Love" are back, in a number of ways - Universal Pictures finally released the theatrical feature, while Rhino Video has lost the distribution rights to the series, rights which now lay in the hands of The Shout! Factory, a distribution company that has already been making like-minded DVD releases of classic horror and sci-fi fare (such as the *Evil's Movie* Macabre double-features). With a new distribution house putting things in order and the long sought-after film finally available again (and did we mention the return of the MST3K characters online in new animated shorts and merchandise?), we thought this would be a good time to catch up with that crew of the *Satellite of Love*, find out where they are now, and how they have been keeping the funny alive nearly ten years later!

## About MST3K

The original idea behind the show involved two mad scientists, Dr. Clayton Forrester (played by Trace Beaulieu) and his sidekick Dr. Laurence Erhardt (Josh Weinstein) who have launched their janitor, Joel Robinson (Joel Hodgson) into space, and are forcing him to watch horrible B-movies. How many bad movies does it take to drive a person insane? This was the question at hand, as they force-fed Joel weekly doses of insanity. Joel, however, combats the effects by creating robot friends to help him kill time and make light of (or "riff" on) the films they are so brutally forced to view as the focus of Dr. Forrester's study which he intends to use, somehow, in his plan to obtain world domination. Most fans of the show won't remember Dr. Erhardt though, as he was later replaced with lackey, TV's Frank (played by Frank Conniff).

Trapped on board the *Satellite of Love* (the name of Joel's orbiting "prison"), he has destroyed segments of the ship to make, as mentioned, woe-crackin' friends. His robots consisted of Tom Servo (originally voiced by Josh Weinstein, then replaced with Kevin Murphy in the show's second season) and Crow T. Robot (Trace Beaulieu, replaced with Bill Corbett in season eight) as well as seldom-seen Gypsy (Weinstein, then Jim Mallon, and later by Patrick Brantjege). The show premiered in 1988 on KTTVA-TV, and later moved to Comedy Central, a then-fledgling channel who made MST3K the flagship title of the network. The show revolved around feature-length movies in which the three hosts (Joel, Tom Servo, and Crow) would comment throughout with funny musings about the plot (or lack thereof), dialogue, and effects. A number of science-fiction, horror, action, and exploitation films were chosen by the evil Dr. Forrester - some titles of which included the *Godzilla* and *Gamera* film series as well as *Hercules*, *Robot Monster*, *The Crawling Hand*, *Pod People*, *I Conquered the World*, *Zombie Nightmare*, *The Castle of Fu*



Manchu, *The Incredible Melting Man*, and many others

Halfway through the show's fifth season, Mike Nelson (who had been on the show for some time playing bit characters in bumper-segments) replaced Joel as the host of the series. An episode writing Joel off the show ran which featured his character escaping the *Satellite of Love*, thus forcing Dr. Forrester to find a replacement test subject. Stated to be the result of the show's creator wishing to step out of celebrity, the switch seemed to go over well, although there are definitely fans of the show who prefer one host over the other (it helped that Mike also served as the show's lead writer). Comedy Central eventually dropped the title from its line-up, which allowed the Sci-Fi Channel to pick up the ball for the series' seventh season. The pick-up came hot off the heels of a massive letter-writing campaign to save the series.

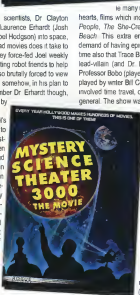
Although a hit, the show induced as many rants as it did fans. The ability to freely "make fun" of "classic" films such as the *Godzilla* sequels (which honestly, weren't that good) made many feel contempt for the show. The disgust and outrage was only furthered in 1996, when the announcement came that MST3K was set to go theatrical, thanks to a special "screening" of the great sci-fi epic, *This Island Earth*. The movie didn't light fires at the box office, as the film was dumped in limited release. Many fans saw the VHS boxes at their local Blockbuster, still thinking the film was waiting for its theatrical run. Later seasons of the show, as it moved to the Sci-Fi Channel, didn't help matters, as the series began to lack-

le many more movies that were held near and dear to classic horror fans' hearts, films which included *Revenge of the Creature*, *The Deadly Mantis*, *The Mole People*, *The She-Creature*, *I Was a Teenage Werewolf*, and *The Horror of Party Beach*. This extra emphasis on sci-fi horror came off the heels of the network's demand of having episodes to coincide with the channel's themes. It was around this time also that Trace Beaulieu had left the show, allowing Mary Jo Pehl to take over as lead-villain (and Dr. Forrester's mother), Pearl. She was joined by silly sidekicks Professor Bobo (played by Murphy in monkey make-up) and the Observer (Brian Guy, played by writer Bill Corbett). The new gang of baddies never felt right, as their antics involved time travel, chasing the "Satellite" in space, and just causing headaches in general. The show was finally cancelled in 1999.

Since the cancellation, the crew behind the *Satellite of Love* have never stopped mocking good and bad cinema. Mike Nelson actually lent his talents to some DVD releases of legitimate films, most notably *Night of the Living Dead*, which was ressed (again) in 2004, this time in color! A very amusing audio track featuring Mike's handy work at gags and one-liners helps make "Night" a little more amusing for those of us who have viewed the film 200 times. (Other horror films which include Mike's commentary are *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Carnival of Souls*, *House on Haunted Hill*, and *Plan 9 from Outer Space*, all available at [www.LegendFilms.net](http://www.LegendFilms.net)). But lending his voice to select DVD releases isn't the only thing Mike has done in the past few years to keep the spirit of MST3K alive. Here is a quick rundown of Mike, and his comrades' work, which feature poking and prodding at the expense of good and mostly bad cinema...

## The Film Crew

Charged with the job of providing commentary tracks for movies that may never resolve them otherwise, The Film Crew (consisting of Michael J. Nelson, Bill Corbett, and Kevin Murphy)



have been featured on TV doing audio over Three Stooges public-domain shorts and in some other segments created for cable channels American Movie Classics, Starz/Encore, and the Sundance Channel. *The Film Crew* finally provided DVD-release, commentary tracks for a series of 8-movies in 2007, thanks to The Shout! Factory. Initially, a poll on the show's website asked viewers to pick between clips to decide what movies were to be released on DVD. *Hollywood After Dark* won out, with the runner-ups being *Killers from Space*, *The Wild Women of Wonga*, and *The Giant of Marathon*. As with some of Mike Nelson's previous post-MST3K work, *The Film Crew* featured no silhouettes over the films.

#### RiffTrax

The *Film Crew* was originally intended for release on Rhino Video's DVD label, but was pushed to the Shout! Factory as the result of a dispute with Best Brains Inc., who were licensing MST3K to Rhino. During the lag-time between finding a new home, RiffTrax was formed, which more than likely means that The *Film Crew*'s job may be over after only four feature releases. The amusing aspect of the story being that the Shout! Factory is now the licensor of MST3K (starting this year), and Rhino is left without their own mock-commentary title in their catalog. RiffTrax is a website offering the purchase of downloadable audio commentaries for legitimate films (which include everything from *The Grudge* and *X-Men* to *The Matrix* and *Road House*). Located at [www.rifftrax.com](http://www.rifftrax.com), the website features plenty of goodies to keep any longing MST3K fan busy. Samples of the work can be viewed on YouTube. Also of note, Mike Nelson became Chief Content Producer in 2006 of Legend Films, who are now releasing legit-copies of yet-to-be-seen films onto DVD, some of which are featured on page 17 of this very issue, including *Student Bodies* and *The Deadly Bees*!

#### Cinematic Titanic

Joel Hodgson as long last returned to the funny business in late-2007 with his new series Cinematic Titanic. The show features a cast of silhouettes (more than a dude and some robots) "riffing" B-movies, which showcases more intricate sight-gags along with a classic MST3K joke-vibe not heard since 1993, when Joel was last seen on the *Satellite of Love*. This new series also features the talents of Trace Beaulieu, J. Elvis Weinstein, Frank Conniff, and Mary Jo Pehl in a grand MST3K reunion. The first feature film to get "riffed" was *Brain of Blood* (AKA: *The Ozong Skull*), followed by *Doomsday Machine* with at least two more episodes in the pipeline. Videos of the series can be purchased online (for download) at [www.cinematictitanic.com](http://www.cinematictitanic.com) at a cost of \$9.99, or for a slightly more significant fee of \$15.94, you can purchase DVDs to ship right to your home!

#### MST3K Returns

Late last year, the official MST3K website returned with all new merchandise and all new videos, this time with a little less-mock. The new videos, currently available on [www.mst3k.com](http://www.mst3k.com), or on YouTube, feature animated versions of the robots, Crow, Tom Servo, and Gypsy. Instead of joking on movies, we are treated to random moments of "fun," ranging from fishing to playing cards... while the quality of the shorts may be questionable, the excitement in seeing fresh new "adventures" for our robot-friends isn't! The shorts are voiced by Paul Chaplin (Crow), James Moore (Tom Servo), and Jim Mallon (Gypsy). The official website also includes behind-the-scenes videos and a website with shirts, hats, and other assorted products featuring classic images from the show as well as new logos based on the animated shorts. Visit [www.mst3k.com](http://www.mst3k.com) today! As for the future of MST3K DVDs, the Shout! Factory are currently working on a release schedule that they claim will not recycle past episode issues, knowing that many fans of the series already own the dozen-plus Rhino box-sets as well as the various single-disc releases that were issued before the four-packs were initiated. Look for the first episodes to hit DVD before year end, with announcements regarding the titles to be involved, hopefully, by next issue. Until then, keep "riffing!"



After being delayed from its October '07 release, *Trick 'r Treat* was recently dropped from Warner Bros. supposedly thanks to the company's questionable inability to properly promote the film. Meanwhile, studios seem to have no problem promoting PG-13 releases.



Since horror-movie's inception, we have joked about the excess of horror remakes, while at the same time going to the local discounter with hopes of enjoying them. While we have been met with our fair share of decent remakes (of course, nothing to the extent of David Cronenberg's *The Fly* or John Carpenter's *The Thing*), as well as a healthy dose of horrible "interpretations," one hard to for sure: remakes DO only have recognition, which in itself results in dollar signs. Below is a list of the most profitable remakes in history, four of which came out in 2008 alone! With numbers like these, it will be a long time before Hollywood gets bored of rehashing classic tales.



1. *The Ring* (2002; \$129.1 Million)
2. *The Grudge* (2004; \$110.4)
3. *The Hurricane* (1999; \$91.4)
4. *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (2003; \$30.6)
5. *The Amityville Horror* (2005; \$65.2)
6. *Dawn of the Dead* (2004; \$59)
7. *Halloween* (2007; \$54.3)
8. *The Coven* (2009; \$54.6)
9. *When a Stranger Calls* (2000; \$47.9)
10. *From Night* (2000; \$43.3)
11. *Thriller* (2001; \$41.9)
12. *The Hills Have Eyes* (2006; \$41.5)



13. *Hooking on How the Hell* (1987; \$40.9)
14. *The Fly* (1986; \$40.8)
15. *House of Wax* (2006; \$32.1)
16. *The Eye* (2008; \$31.4)
17. *The Fog* (2005; \$29.6)
18. *One Missed Call* (2008; \$26.9)
19. *Shutter* (2008; \$25.4)
20. *Dark Water* (2005; \$25.5)

Note: List does not include sequels (sic: *The Ring 2*, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2*, *Twisted* [The Shogun Virus, Red Dragon], or monster movies (King Kong, Godzilla).

**Did You Know?** The silhouettes of the MST3K robots appear in the *Futurama* episode, "Raging Bender," where they comically ask the *Futurama* characters not to talk while in the movie theater.

# Nothing to Fear but... FEAR ITSELF!



On NBC this past June 5th, weekly horror returned to television (and hopefully it was a success... *HorrorHound* went to press the week of the show's premiere). *Fear Itself* is a new weekly series spawned from the Showtime cable title: *Masters of Horror*. Essentially the third in the "Masters" series, *Fear Itself* is a new production by Lionsgate, in association with IE Indy TV, Industry Entertainment's newly formed independent television label, and was created by Mick Garris. Made for television, this new darkly imagined string of hour-long "movies" are expected to keep the cool-factor that had fans tuning in week-to-week on Showtime, featuring the biggest names in horror: writers and directors. A focus on younger actors and a PG-13 themed show may initially detract, but early previews gave hope of a return to the terror. The *Masters* series took a dive in interest during its second season, mostly associated with the series' newfound focus on political horror. Despite the topic, the rating, or the talent involved - *Fear Itself* does look to deliver in the scares, and that is all that matters. The new series features a host of fresh talent who had yet to work with Garris on his Showtime program. For your enjoyment, we have attempted to piece together an episode guide based on current knowledge revolving around the show.



Michelle Maitreux and Micaela Mayne in *Sacrifice*

**The Sacrifice** - Screenplay written by Mick Garris (*Riding the Bullet*), from a story by Del Howison (*Dark Delicacies*), Breck Eisner (the upcoming *Creature from the Black Lagoon* remake) directs. When four criminals find themselves stranded in an old, snow-covered fort, they slowly discover both the fort and the seductive trio of sirens who reside there are filled with deadly secrets.

**In Sickness and in Health** - Directed by John Landis (*An American Werewolf in London*) and written by Victor Salva (*Jeepers Creepers*). On her wedding day, a beautiful bride (Maggie Lawson; *Psych*) receives a mysterious note that reads: "The person you are marrying is a serial killer."

**Family Man** - Directed by Ronny Yu (*Freddy vs. Jason*) and written by Dan Knauf (*Supernatural*). This psychological thriller focuses on a likeable family man (Colin Ferguson; *Eureka*) who switches bodies with a serial killer (Clifton Collins Jr.) after a near-death experience. Now, he must fight from behind bars to keep the murderer from adding his wife (Josie Davis), son (Gig Morton), and daughter (Nicole Leduc) to his long list of victims.

**Something With Bite** - Directed by Ernest Dickerson (*Demon Knight*). A reinvention of the classic werewolf story from writer Max Landis, the son of John Landis. When a veterinarian (Wendell Pierce) gets bitten by a large, strange animal, he begins to see the world, and his state life, differently.

**New Year's Day** - Directed by Darren Lynn Bousman (*Saw IV*), and is written by Steve Niles (*30 Days of Night*) about a story by Paul Kane. A young woman (Briana Evigan, *Step Up 2: The Streets*) wakes up in a post-apocalyptic world overrun by horrifying zombies.

**Skin & Bones** - Directed by Larry Fessenden (*Wendigo*), and written by Drew McWeeny and Scott Swan. When a cattle herder returns home to his family after being lost in the woods for days, he just doesn't seem the same. Soon, a terrible mortal struggle ensues against the terrifying monster possessing him.

**The Spirit Box** - Directed by Rupert Wainwright (*The Fog*, *Stigmata*) and written by Joe Gangemi (*Wind Chills*). When two suburban high school girls try to contact a dead classmate via a board game, they receive an unexpected message from beyond the grave. The dead girl, thought to be a teen suicide, was actually killed by a teacher with whom she'd been having an affair, and now wants their help in avenging her murder.

**Chance** - Directed by John Dahl (*You Kill Me*) and written by Lem Dobbs (*The Score*). In the vein of such classic doppelgänger stories as "Jekyll & Hyde" and Poe's "William Wilson," the episode explores a dreadful, classic battle that ensues when a man is confronted by his evil self.

**Echoes** - Written by Sean Hood (*Halloween: Resurrection*) with a director yet to be announced. Sam, an affable, good-natured young man, moves into an apartment where he believes he once lived - eighty-eight years ago in a past life. But as memories appear to him like ghosts, he realizes that in this previous life he was a sadistic murderer, and he must keep that past life from bleeding into his present one.

**The Circle** - Written by Cemetery Dance Magazine publisher and editor Richard Chizmar (*From a Buckle*) and actor Johnathon Schaech, based on the short story of the same title written by Lewis Shiner, with a director to be announced. A group of people meet every Halloween to tell horror stories and suddenly discover they're living one.

**Eater** - Written by Richard Chizmar and Johnathon Schaech, and directed by Stuart Gordon (*Re-Animator*). A rookie cop must spend her first night in the precinct watching over a serial killer, coined "The Eater." When her fellow officers start acting bizarre, she quickly learns that no one is who they seem.

**Spooked** - Directed by Brad Anderson (*The Machinist*) and written by Matt Venne (*White Noise 2: The Light*). While on a stake out in a haunted house, a private eye is forced to confront the demons of his past.

**Community** - Directed by Mary Harron (*American Psycho*) and written by Kelly Knepper. When a young married couple, played by Brandon Routh (*Superman Returns*) and Shin Apley, find the perfect house in the perfect neighborhood, their lives seem... well... perfect. But as the dark underbelly of their neighborhood creeps to the surface, they soon realize that their neighbors will go to any extreme - even murder - to make sure that they comply with their twisted sense of conformity.

*Fear Itself* (hopefully still) airs Thursdays at 10:00 P.M. (weekend standard time)



If you jump onto your computer and head over to [entertainmentearth.com](http://entertainmentearth.com), you will find the first in (hopefully) a line of new Duskier merchandise! From Big Bang Pow! this resin bobble head features America's most beloved serial killer, splattered in blood! Look for it to ship this June, available online or at retail in select outlets such as Suncoast (if your mall still has one) and Spencer's.

George A. Romero's

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## PIECES: Deluxe Edition

One of the most violent films of the 1980s slasher era, *Pieces* (or *Mil grintos tiene la noche*) is a Gorehound's delight that has gone largely unavailable on home video's DVD format (with exception to a low-grade out-of-print bare-bone release by Diamond Entertainment Corp. in 2000) for some time. Thankfully the ghouls at Grindhouse Releasing are fixing this problem. This fall look for an original uncensored theatrical release of this film on DVD in an all-new hi-def digital anamorphic widescreen transfer. With an optional Spanish soundtrack and original score by Librado Pastor as well as an optional "Vine Theater Hollywood Experience" track with a "live" audience. The two-disc set has tons of extras, including never-before-seen interviews with director Juan Piquer and "genre superstar" Paul L. Smith... a gallery of stills and poster art as well as filmographies, liner notes by legendary horror journalist Chas Balun, and other surprises are in store!

Grindhouse Releasing is the company responsible for delivering the best possible US DVD release of *Cannibal Holocaust* in a two-disc clam shell box set

as well as other rare horror gems ranging from *I Drink Your Blood* to *Cannibal Ferox*. Anyone familiar with Grindhouse Releasing knows how much effort and love goes into their productions of special edition DVDs, and *Pieces* is a top choice film for so many within the industry, having gained endorsements from such names as Joe Bob Briggs, Bill Landis, and Eli Roth: "One of the top horror films of all time!" Eli exclaims about the film, "Not only is this the ultimate chainsaw movie, it's the ultimate slasher film. It has everything you could possibly want, by the bucketful: Full on chainsaw violence, absurd amounts of nudity, and the greatest ending in horror history. A masterpiece of early '80s sleaze!" To learn more about *Pieces*, and other overlooked slashers of the '80s, be sure to check out page 40 of this very issue!



## 10 QUESTIONS WITH Ruggero Deodato

Each issue we all down with a different horror director to discuss film, home life, and other assorted tidbits that happen to come into play. The result? 10 Random Questions. This issue, *Cannibal Holocaust* director, Ruggero Deodato! *HorrorHound* was able to steal a few minutes away from Mr. Deodato's busy life to find out those ten seemingly random questions that you, the readers, may or may not have wanted to know.

**HorrorHound:** What types of American films disturb you?

**Ruggero Deodato:** I would say Quentin Tarantino films. Pulp Fiction. *Kill Bill*... because they are more realistic and closer to me.

**HH:** What is your favorite American cuisine?

**RD:** I forget [laughs]. When you go to the big city, there are many restaurants that are fantastic. European, Italian... in New York they are very very good. But other places aren't so good. When I do eat in America, at restaurants I most often order spaghetti.

**HH:** Which can be scarier - televisions or telephones?

**RD:** I feel telephones are more scary.

**HH:** What would you say is the worst way to die?

**RD:** Water.

**HH:** What US actor do you wish you had worked with?

**RD:** Jack Nicholson. DeNiro.

**HH:** How do you keep yourself busy on long plane trips?

**RD:** I read all of a big book. It takes many, many hours I am surprised. Last time I brought four books and I read them all! It's better to read.

**HH:** Who is your all-time favorite director?

**RD:** Spielberg.

**HH:** What's the biggest thing you learned from Eli Roth?

**RD:** Business. He is very charming and has a very good public relation. More than me.

**HH:** Do you own a *Cannibal Holocaust* T-shirt?

**RD:** Yes. I have one displayed in my studio. I never wear it. When I flew to the set of *Hostel 2*, the entire film crew of one-hundred people, were wearing *Cannibal Holocaust* shirts. It made me cry.

**HH:** What is the most embarrassing thing to happen to you?

**RD:** *Cannibal Holocaust*, for the animals. I am embarrassed. If I could go back in my life, I would not do that. For two reasons. One, it is forbidden in many many places to do that. Second, because I love animals.

Ruggero is currently in talks to produce a new film project, *Cannibals*, a remake (or companion piece, as it's being touted) to his classic, *Cannibal Holocaust*, as he tries to relaunch the subgenre he made famous! More on that in future pages of *HorrorHound*!



# CHOICE CUTS:

# HORROR ON DVD



After ten years of waiting for the WB to release a special edition DVD of *Beethoven*, we finally get a new disc this September. Not exactly the "30" we deserve, this DVD includes no extra materials outside of three episodes from the old animated series and a widescreen transfer of the film. **B-**



New Line announced a director's cut of *Dark City* for release on July 29th. Directed by Alex Proyas, the film stars Kiefer Sutherland and Jennifer Connelly. This disc will include both theatrical and director's cuts of the film, commentary tracks, an introduction, making-of-a-gallery, trailers and more. **A-**



Legend Films have uncovered a number of exciting Paramount film titles for first-time DVD release! One of such titles includes the 1987 Freddie Franco (*Tales from the Crypt*) film, *The Deadly Rees*. Starring Suzanne Leigh Frank Fisher, and Guy Doleman, look for this movie in stores this July!



On July 29th, the Jess Franco cannibal flick, *Devil Hunter* (AKA *Sono cannibali*) finally comes to DVD! Thanks to Severin Films who have been hard at work releasing some great titles to home video, *Devil Hunter* will be presented in a new hi-Def transfer and include a Jess Franco interview and trailers.



Neil Marshall's (*Dog Soldiers*, *The Descent*) latest film, *Dooomsday*, which stars Pierce Brosnan, Bob Odenkirk, Michael McDowell, and Alexander Siddig, will be available on DVD as of July 29th. A director and cast commentary as well as multiple featurettes will be included in this unrated disc format.



The Ping Ponger's second sequel in their amazing *Eye Trilogy* is set for US DVD release on June 24th, thanks to Lionsgate Home Entertainment. Presented with English subtitles, extra material on the disc will include a *Two Ways to See Ghosts* featurette as well as a making-of *The Eye 3* featurette. **B+**



On August 28th, Synapse Films will finally release the highly anticipated *Home Suck*, starring Bill Moseley, Tiffany Shepis, and Tom Towles. The disc will sport a director's commentary track, a deleted opening sequence, a making-of featurette, original short films, and a Bill Moseley interview. **A-**



On July 29th, Warner Premiere unveils *Lost Boy 2: The Tribe*, a direct-to-DVD sequel to the 1987 classic. Bonus features found on the disc include both widescreen and full-screen formats of the film, a *Conny Delantoni* interview, alternate endings, music videos and a short featurette!



As mentioned above, Legend Films have acquired distribution rights for a number of Paramount feature films, titles which include *The Man Who Could Cheat Death* (available in July), *Phantom IV: The Serpent*, *The Possession of Joel Delaney*, *Zero Population Growth*, and *Peter Cushing's The Skull*.



In celebration (or promotion) of the upcoming Universal Pictures' *Mummy* sequel, a new DVD special edition of the classic *Bruce Campbell* feature, *The Mummy*, is planned for release on July 16th. A two-disc collector's edition of the *Stephen Sommers* film, *Max* Helms, is also planned.



On August 31st, another new title will join the increasingly impressive DVDboxset Extravaganza label, *Rogue*! Directed by Greg McLean (*Wolf Creek*), this grant cost feature will include the following extras: a commentary by Greg McLean, making-of, and a featurette entitled, *The Real Rogue*. **B+**



Available in either the original rated theatrical cut (TV-screened) or unrated (widescreen only) comes the latest J-horror remake, *Shutter*. Deleted scenes, commentary, and featurettes (as well as a first-look at *Mitsuru*) will all be packed on this special edition feature that hits stores on July 18th.



One of Horrorland's most wanted films yet to become available on DVD, *Student Bodies* is another great new add from Legend Films. The movie is a spoof on the slasher genre, showcasing a heavy-breasting killer and other splendid gory carnage. Available at LegendFilms.com today!



Warner Home Video announced the third season of *Supernatural*, starring Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles. The five-disc box set (featuring all season episodes) will be available on September 2nd and will retail for around \$59.98. No bonus materials have been announced as of yet.



On July 25th, The Shout! Factory will not only release the second volume of their *Swamp Thing* television series, but also *Swamp Thing* ran on the USA Network from 1989-1993. This set of which includes four discs containing the first twenty-five episodes of the show's third season.

# FRIDAY THE 13TH THE SERIES!

In 1987, at the height of the success of Jason Voorhees and his *Friday The 13th* film series, a new type of "Friday" series was created. It still held the name of the creature "Friday"; however, Jason and his hockey mask were nowhere to be found. It instead featured a trio of friends who have inherited a cursed antique store from their "special" items had been sold over the course of time to unsuspecting customers. The unique career with their powers but would have made the genre's greatest: diverse become a really, pretty scary thing, stopping time, to making people do as you command. The show starred John C. Lilly, Louise Lasser, and Chris Higgins. Lasser's character, Heidi, was tasked with the job of buying and collecting the cursed antique her uncle had sold after he had made a pact with the Devil, allowing him to curse all of the shop's items. After his death, she sought out help from her cousin, Ryan (Mike) and friend, Jack (Wojcik), to track down and break away the items in question. The show lasted three seasons, with main cast member, Ryan being replaced by a love interest for Mike, Johnny Vertone (played by Steve Maroney), who was introduced in season two, had replaced Ryan permanently in season three). John C. Lilly, ironically, later starred in the 1993 New Line Cinema produced *Jason Goes to Hell*.

Unlike other shows of the '80s appeared from such fantastical creatures (A Nightmare on Elm Street), the *Friday* the 13th TV series had no connection to the films and was actually very entertaining. It had the feel of the early *X-Files* as Miller and Scully hunted down their first case, vertigo and nightmares. Since the show ended in 1991, it has been a hot commodity on the "grey" market, thanks to bootleg DVDs cataloging the series. The show had a brief return to TV thanks to the SoS-F Channel entry years ago, and more recently saw a return to television thanks to the Online Cable Network.

In a surprise move, a possible official DVD release of the series may finally be on the horizon! A season one box set (featuring to Paramount Home Video) is available for pre-order on Amazon.com for a decent price of \$37.95 (with a total offer of \$49.95, no release date is listed, however it is more likely to coincide with the release of the upcoming *Friday* remake on February 13th, 2009. For those of you who have not yet had the pleasure, be sure to pick up this first season set when it does see release. You won't regret it!



Also on DVD: Code Red Films are pushing out a multitude of unreleased titles ranging from *The Dead Pit*, *The Unseen*, *Nightmare*, and *Final Exam*! Visit [CodeRedDVD.com](http://CodeRedDVD.com) today for more info!

# VIDEO INVASION

## REMEMBERING THE VHS BOOM

BY MATT MOORE

CHAPTER ONE

### VESTRON VIDEO



One couldn't have breezed through a video store in the 1980s without noticing the countless titles released by Vestron Video. For us horror fans, Vestron had one of the widest selections in our genre. With classic films, such as *The Incredible Melting Man*, *Pieces*, *Don't Go in the Woods*, *Ghoules*, *Hoves* by the Cemetery, *From Beyond*, and countless others, it left most of us standing in the horror section for long periods of time trying to pick out which title we would shock ourselves with this weekend.

Vestron took most of its releases and promoted them like no other company. From mobiles and standees, to paper weights and original poster designs, Vestron helped create a name for themselves as the "go to" for horror and sci-fi.

One practice Vestron utilized that is common in today's market is the release of rated and unrated versions of some of our favorite splatter and slasher films, for example: *Re-Animator*, *Last House on the Left*, *The Mutilator*, and *Slaughter High*. Most often these rated and unrated versions would have slight variations to the box. Some had different color boxes, like *Re-Animator* and *Mutilator*, while others had a small bubble on the box signifying as such (*Last House on the Left*).

Most of the titles that we grew up watching and led us into horror were thanks to Vestron. Titles like *Rocktober Blood*, *Bloodsucking Freaks*, *Future Kill*, *Squim*, and *The Gate* received their first release to home video courtesy of Vestron. Vestron's popularity grew greatly thanks to that.

#### The History of Vestron.

Vestron Video came into the video market in 1983, only a few years after another major player, Media Home Entertainment. This Connecticut-based studio had a growing catalog unlike any other company at the time. With a couple thousand titles under their wings, everything ranging from sex comedies to Vietnam War films (even Andrew Dice Clay live performances), Vestron released their titles in dunes. Checking over old MVC catalogs, you can sometimes find Vestron's release schedule ranging anywhere from ten to twenty titles a month... sometimes more.

With their start mainly being in B-grade movies, Vestron acquired many titles with ease, distributing them worldwide to over thirty countries. Only a few years after they began, Vestron actually held over ten percent of the US video market. At a high point in the company's duration, their sales were above the \$350 million mark! Seeing this, many studios began increasing the red tape on their licenses to help deter companies like Vestron from gaining the rights to distribute their titles. Independent film companies also took notice and began to gradually raise their prices as well. With these problems at hand, Vestron decided to take a new step into the movie market: production.

Forming Vestron Pictures around 1986, Vestron focused more of their attention on producing and releasing their own films, such as *Earth Girls Are Easy* and *Dirty Dancing*. With this in mind, Vestron Inc. decided to create another company to continue the march of releasing our treasured horror and sci-fi films (AKA: their large catalog of B to Z grade flicks). That company was Lightning Video, and although Lightning Video was short lived, it still put out the same caliber of content as Vestron once did. Lightning's releases dug deeper into the mold and obtained rights to overseas films such as *Frozen Terror* (which is Lamberto Bava's film *Macabre*, retitled) and even American classics like the first superhero from New Jersey: *The Toxic Avenger*. Vestron even broke into the Laserdisc and Beta markets in the late



80s, releasing many rare gems from their library. As we all know, Beta died in a hurry while Laserdisc bled out a little longer, however, this did not stop the determination Vestron had to put their films out and to stay at the top of the game.

Another interesting move was made by Vestron when they laid down provisions for wrestling fans and became the first company to release wrestling matches to the home video format. *The Lord of the Ring Presents* series came out just before the first WWF (now called WWE) videos were released. Those videos today fetch a fair price on the collector market. They were also heavy into history related documentaries and were the first company to distribute the National Geographic films; the same ones the vast majority of us saw in our science and history classes in grade school.

Distribution was an easy feat for Vestron. During their peak of sales in the US, they decided to open an international market of distribution for their films entitled Vestron International. This allowed them to tap into markets that had a slow growing or non-existent video market, giving them the ability to unleash their mass catalog and help gain more films to add to the fold. Under their Lightning Video label, they also cut deals with other notable horror driven video companies, such as Wizard Video. Most of the Wizard Video releases have either a logo on the box or the good old Lightning Video safety sticker attached to it, which helped get even more obscure titles into our local shops and into our living rooms.

But as with most of the titans of video, all good things came to an end. While gaining momentum with their production company with many films in the pipeline, financing started to fall through for a lot of their projects and, unfortunately, they eventually declared Chapter Eleven bankruptcy. On January 11, 1991, Live Entertainment purchased Vestron Inc. for \$27.3 million dollars. With this purchase, Live obtained the archive of films under the Vestron banner including the releases made through their Lightning Entertainment branch. Later on into the '90s, Live changed their name to Arisan





Entertainment, which has since been purchased by Lionsgate Entertainment.

Some of Vestron's titles in the mid '90s were released by budget label, Video Treasures. Changing the artwork on a lot of the titles they released, mainly the color of the boxes, they brought a lot of the classic titles they had held back into the mainstream by selling them at local shops for a mere \$10-15, a nice drop in cost considering the original Vestron prices ranging from \$49.99 to \$109.99 (Yes, videos did cost that much back then! Kind of hard to believe, but that's one of the many reasons we all rented).

Sadly, over time the horror titles Vestron owned have been sold-off and purchased by larger companies such as Sony, MGM, and Fox. However, Lionsgate still has quite a few of the Vestron gems, as they displayed in 2007 with the release of their special edition of *Monster Squad* (more on that next issue). Hopefully as time progresses, classics like *Death Weekend* and the unrated version of *Waxwork* will make it into our living rooms. But until then, the Vestron tapes work just fine.

#### The Promotions:

Like most companies, displays and posters were as common as covers.



For videos, and Vestron was no exception. Upon the release of *Re-Animator*, they issued a Vestron video poster and a paperweight of our beloved Dr. Hill's head in a pan. Made out of pewter, the paperweight over the years has become one of the most sought after collectibles from the film's video release. When *Evil Dead 2* was released, Vestron gave us a standard video poster as well as a mobile. The mobile was four-sided, printed with the box art and one-sheet skull; it is considered one of the best video store mobiles ever released. Another promo item Vestron put into video buyer's hands was an inflatable toilet in honor of *Ghoulies 2*, with both *Ghoulies* coming out of the commode to say hi. *Last House on the Left*'s release spawned a rather hard to find pen, triangular in shape with the *Last House on the Left* logo printed on the side (with the clip being a plastic house). They also put out many oversized promo container boxes to display films coming out soon or already available: *Mutant*, *Troll*, and *Waxwork* are a few titles that received such treatment.

Some non-horror items they released as promos were a luggage tag for the film *After the Fall of New York*, a mini-flashlight for *Savage Streets*, a license plate cover for *Wheels of Fire*, and a letter opener for *The Warmer and the Sorcerer*.



Don't Stop On Your Way To THE LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT



## VESTRON VIDEO HORROR BODY COUNT:

- |                                 |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 1. 976-Evil 2                   | 27. Eyes of Fire   | 52. Last House on the Left (Unrated, Black)  | 78. Slaughter High (Unrated, Black Box)      |
| 2. Abominably Dr. Phibes, The   | 28. Final Terror, The  | 53. Life Force                               | 79. Sole Survivor                            |
| 3. Amsterdam                    | 29. Food of the Gods, The                                    | 54. Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane, The | 80. Splatter University (Rated, Grey Box)    |
| 4. Amityville 3D                | 30. From Beyond  | 55. Love-Thrill Murders, The                 | 81. Splatter University (Unrated, White Box) |
| 5. Black Room, The              | 31. Funland  | 56. Manipulator, The                         | 82. Squirm                                   |
| 6. Blood Diner                  | 32. Future Kill  | 57. Missing Michael Jackson's Thriller       | 83. Sundown: The Vampire in Retreat          |
| 7. Bloodsucking Freaks          | 33. Gals, The  | 58. Mark of the Devil (Lito Kier)            | 84. Sweet Satan                              |
| 8. Burned Ground                | 34. Ghoulies   | 59. Monster Squad, The                       | 85. Temback                                  |
| 9. Carnous Copses, The          | 35. Ghoulies II  | 60. Mortuary                                 | 86. Terminal Choice                          |
| 10. Changing, The               | 36. Ghoulies IV: Ghoulies Go to College                      | 61. Mutant                                   | 87. Terror Within II, The                    |
| 11. Chaselsing, The             | 37. Goodland, The  | 62. Mutablar, The (Rated, Blue Box)          | 88. They Came from Within (AKA: Stewies)     |
| 12. Children, The               | 38. Gothic   | 63. Mutablar, The (Unrated, Black Box)       | 89. Too Scared to Scream                     |
| 13. CHUD II: Bud the Chud       | 39. Hard Rock Zombies  | 64. Night of the Zombies (AKA: Virus)        | 90. Transmutations (AKA: Underworld)         |
| 14. Company of Wolves, The      | 40. Holocaust 2000   | 65. Other Hell, The                          | 91. Trick or Treats                          |
| 15. Crawling, The (Plexi Nasty) | 41. House by the Cemetery                                    | 66. Paperhouse                               | 92. Troll                                    |
| 16. Curtains                    | 42. House on Sorority Row                                    | 67. Parents                                  | 93. Unholy: The                              |
| 17. Dead and Buried             | 43. House on the Edge of the Park                            | 68. Pieces                                   | 94. Up from the Depths                       |
| 18. Deadly Possession           | 44. Incredible Melting Man, The                              | 69. Possession                               | 95. Waxwork (Rated, Blue Box)                |
| 19. Death Warmed Up             | 45. Incubus, The   | 70. Power, The                               | 96. Waxwork (Unrated, Black Box)             |
| 20. Death Weekend               | 46. Invasion of the Flesh Hunters (AKA: Cannibal Apocalypse) | 71. Rawhead Rex                              | 97. Who Stew Auntie Roo?                     |
| 21. Devil's Gift, The           | 47. Island Claws   | 72. Re-Animator (Rated, Black Box)           | 98. Whodunnit?                               |
| 22. Dolls                       | 48. Jack the Ripper (Klaus Kinski)                           | 73. Re-Animator (Unrated, Blue Box)          |  |
| 23. Don't Go in the Woods       | 49. Kindred, The   | 74. Rockabuster (Unrated)                    |  |
| 24. Don't Open till Christmas   | 50. Lar of the White Worm, The                               | 75. Scarses                                  |  |
| 25. Dr. Phibes Rises Again      | 51. Last House on the Left (Rated, White)                    | 76. Scarses and Die                          |  |
| 26. Evil Dead 2                 |  | 77. Slaughter High (Rated, Red Box)          |  |

Special thanks to everyone who helped in the production of this article: Charles Lind, Michael Felsner, Larry New, Raymond Henscott, Kevin and Philie at K&O Video in Richmond, VA, and Mike at The Video Mart Corp. in Richmond, VA.

**Did You Know?** On top of a few of the exciting promotional items shown above, Vestron also released lenticular *Troll* and *Sole Survivor* pins!

HorrorHound 19

# TOY NEWS

## AMOK TIME MONSTARZ

### KILLER KLOWNS FROM OUTER SPACE

HORRORHOUND  
EXCLUSIVE!

In each of the last three issues of *HorrorHound* magazine, we have been able to premiere the latest action figure announcements from Amok Time Toys' Monstarz toy line, from *Day of the Dead's* Bub to ... *Day of the Dead's* Dr. Torque. Get ready for something with a pulse: Amok has revealed that they have acquired the action figure rights to Killer Klowns from Outer Space. Shown here is but the first in hopefully a long-series of 7" scale "Klowns" As long as sales maintain the series, fans of the license should expect plenty of Klown characters and creatures seen throughout the film. Amok has already begun working on a brand new piece in this series... something big! Look for Shorfy here to hit stores early 2009!

To celebrate this new license acquisition, we have taken a look (below) at the very brief history of Killer Klowns merch! The classic Death Studio/Darkside Studio high-end Halloween masks have since been replaced with licensed masks and costumes from Bump in the Night Productions (for a complete look at the "Bump" Klown series, turn to page 53). SOTA Toys originally released a Killer Klown figure a few years ago, while a follow-up figure has been promised for the last two years. Now that Amok has the license, fans can finally stop holding out for their next SOTA Klown instalment.

Also unveiled this past month is the license announcements for both *It Came from Outer Space* and *Blacula!* Fans of the *Blacula* films can expect a 12" figure to be unveiled (hopefully) next issue, with a 7" scaled version possible (pending demand). Now from the 12" toy department this month comes an addition to the *Night of the Living Dead* toy series (Kyra Schon, due in stores this December). Figures based on Paul Blaisdel's *Invasion of the Saucermen* are also planned to hit stores late June!



Masks originally released through Death Studios, drawing heavily and later released by the line folks at Darkside Studio. Turn to page 53 to learn more about the Klown mask line!

Previously Klown figure released by SOTA including a blue variant. The Killer Klown will never see release by SOTA (who also had planned to make a *Blacula* and other figures).



# SIDESHOW COLLECTIBLES

Gearing up for the San Diego Comic-Con, Sideshow Collectibles is readying for the release of some big new products, the most notable being the second in their new Universal Monsters status assortment: Dracula with Renfield. Expected to ship early '09, this statue is available at SideshowCollectibles.com for the low price of \$199.99. As part of their distribution deal with various production companies in the industry, Sideshow has also unveiled new pre-sales in the form of Electric Blue's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* animated maquette series (*Willow*) as well as FunkoFigures' Judge Dredd vs. Aliens bust. Look for these items to ship this fall, priced at \$89.99 and \$299.99, respectively. The recently released zombie soldier, Subject 805, from the highly popular *The Dead* 12" toy line (shown below boxed and loose) will soon have company in the form of the Babysitter Zombie (originally revealed last issue). San Diego Comic-Con attendees will have an opportunity to nab her early in this blonde-haired exclusive soldier (shown below).



Shown at left is the next 12" figure announced for AmekTime's *Night of the Living Dead* toy license. This deluxe collectors edition Kyra Schon as Karen Cooper will ship this December and is on pre-sell at AmekTime.com's webstore for \$49.99.



**Did You Know?** The Judge Dredd/Aliens bust above is based off the classic illustration by Henry Flint (Dredd vs. Aliens: Incubus). The 12" tall polystone bust is limited to only 1,000 pieces.

# NECA

## CULT CLASSICS

As first mentioned last issue, *The Exorcist*'s Regan MacNeil (posed in the spooky spider-walk scene, shown below) will be a part of the upcoming Cult Classics 7 assortment along with Stuntman Mike (*Grindhouse*) and pin-striped Beetlejuice (both shown last issue)! Following "CC7" will be a boxed set of Regan in her bed (with spinning head mechanism and sound). Last issue we also got a peek at the eighth Cult Classics assortment, which will include the Danny Trejo-character Machete from *Grindhouse* (shown last issue), along with Chamberlain (*The Dark Crystal*) and another Beetlejuice figure (in his burgundy wedding attire, shown on this page). Also look for an 18" version of the pin-striped Beetlejuice by year end!



Also shown is a number of new Cult Classics figure releases, including the new Hall of Fame figures featuring Captain Spaulding (*House of 1000 Corpses*), Michael Myers (*Halloween*), The Crow as well as a new Alien in 18" and 7" scale!





# MEZCO CINEMA OF FEAR

Mezco has unveiled their next assortment of Cinema of Fear action figures, giving fans more New Line Cinema horror love! Cinema of Fear series 3 features the re-envisioned Leatherface from Platinum Dune's remake of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, Jason Voorhees from *Jason Goes to Hell*, Freddy Krueger as a chef (*A Nightmare on Elm Street: Part 4*), and finally... *The Hitchhiker* from the original *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*! On top of this, we have a look at the second "COF" assortment in-package (below), featuring the trio of terrors as well as Nancy Thompson from the original "Nightmare!"

Also look for the mini-dioramas, now in stores.

## Not Just 7" Anymore!

Unlike most toy companies, Mezco has given their fans a number of choices when hunting down the latest collectibles based on Jason, Leatherface, and Freddy. Case in point is this new 12" scale Jason Voorhees based on his look from *Friday the 13th: Part 7*. Also shown below is the first in a series of vinyl figures based on the New Line horrors, Jason is based off his look from "Friday 3," and actually features a variant exclusive based off his look from *Freddy vs. Jason*, available at 2006 conventions!



**Quotable Quotes:** "I think we just picked up Dracula." - Paul A. Partain, speaking about *The Hitchhiker* (*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*)

# DEFINING GIALLO

by aaron crowell with kenny nelson

Giallo. As a dedicated HorrorHound you may have come across the word, but do you really know what it means? By definition, Giallo is the Italian word for the color "yellow." Most commonly associated with the eye-catching yellow covers of early Italian pulp novels produced for a great many years by Mondadori Publishing dating back to 1929. These paperback thrillers often contained tales of sex, mystery, and murder, with the earliest examples being English-language novels translated into Italian. In the years that followed, these stories began to lend themselves quite nicely to low budget cinema fare, hence leading to the coming of the pseudonym "Giallo" to represent this genre of film. In the mid-to-late '60s, the Giallo really took hold in Italy, and by the '70s it became big business. During this peak period of popularity, nearly every Italian director dived into an anglicized pseudonym (by their producer) and took a proverbial stab at this genre of filmmaking. There are several key elements that help both define and separate the Giallo from a typical Hitchcockian styled whodunit murder mystery. Beautiful women appear as both heroines and victims, commonly models, often scantily clad (sometimes nude) irradiating an overwhelming sense of eroticism through out the picture. The over-complicated whodunit plot is often involving, but not always limited to, the revelation or discovery of the killer's secret identity. This being made even more difficult by red hennings (things that draw attention away from the central plot) such as suspicious supporting characters, all with their own possible set of malicious motives and agendas to commit homicide. The film's psychopath sometimes wears sunglasses, but is more commonly dressed in the trademark Giallo killer disguise, consisting of a black trench coat, hat, black leather gloves, and sometimes a mask. These trademark killers also frequently appear equipped with a bladed weapon, such as

intelligent, yet artistic works of prose: *Forbidden Photos of a Lady Above Suspicion*, *Your Vice is a Locked Door and Only I Have the Key*, *The Red Queen Kills Seven Times*, etc.

So where did it all begin?

The Giallo genre first took flight with a picture titled *The Girl Who Knew Too Much*, AKA: *The Evil Eye*, released in 1962, starring John Saxton, and directed by Mario Bava. This black and white feature, whose title is an obvious play on the Hitchcock film *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, was a far more conservative effort compared to what fruit the genre would later bare. Bava, who had grown up under the influence of American filmmakers, such as Alfred Hitchcock and reading pulp fiction periodicals written by Agatha Christie, Edgar Wallace, and Mickey Spillane, had already proved himself as a master of the macabre with hit films *Black Sunday* (1960) and *Black Sabbath* (1963). It was not until the release of his second title in this genre that the quintessential look and style of the yellow films became more clear cut. *Blood and Black Lace* was released in 1964 and presented the first disguised killer, complete with his own graphic and brutal tendency for on-screen bloodshed, all the while, hidden away behind a bright white silk mask and black dress attire. This masked killer is the forerunner and true template for nearly every iconic slasher contemporary that followed, such as Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees and even obscure ones like the Copsey killer seen in *The Burning*. The film also set a standard by casting its lovely leading ladies as fashion models, a recurring theme and staple seen throughout the genre.

*Blood and Black Lace* revolves around a fashion house filled with gorgeous models who are being offed one at a time by our cleverly-disguised villain. Sounds a bit similar to our slasher movies of today doesn't it? Well, it should since the Giallo gave birth to the slasher sub-genre, and no other film did more to get that ball rolling than the 1971 Mario Bava classic *A Bay of Blood* (also known as *Twilight of the Death Nerve*). So what sets a slasher apart from a Giallo? In a Giallo, if the graphic murder scenes and bloody body count are removed, you still have a competent narrative whodunit picture. You can't really say that about a slasher where these two elements are the main focal point of the movie. Remove all those key ingredients from a slasher title, and you are basically left with a soft core, coming-of-age, T&A flick at best. Bava released two more Giallo films which presented varying directions for the genre to follow. His 1969



*The Evil Eye* (AKA: *The Girl Who Knew Too Much*) one-sheet (1964)

a knife, straight razor, or even something far more unique or diabolical in which to dispatch his or her victim. Let us not forget the most important point of separation: the ultra-violent and gory murder-set-pieces generally consisting of misogynistic overtones shot in lavish surroundings, accented with musical arrangements. Last but not least, the twist ending, often consisting of several layers and not always completely coherent.

Gialli (the plural for Giallo) typically introduce very strong psychological themes such as insanity, paranoia and alienation generally attributed to blackmail, adultery or impotence. Even the habitually long titles of these pictures are



Foreign poster for *Blood and Black Lace* (1964)



*The Blood and Black Lace*

# BAHIA DE SANGRE



Scarlet poster for Bahia de Sangre (1973)

*Hatchet For a Honeymoon* oozed with psychological Hitchcockian flavor while his 1970 *Five Dolls For An August Moon* adapted and set the standard for the more tame and bloodless Gialli to follow.

Mario Bava may have ushered the Giallo into cinema, but it was largely Dario Argento who brought the emerging Italian genre to the mainstream. In 1970, Argento unleashed his directorial debut, *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, the first film in what would eventually become known as "The Animal Trilogy." The story revolves around a writer who happens to stumble upon a murder

release, concerned a drummer in a rock band who accidentally murders a man he feels has been following him for days. The plot takes flight when a photograph is taken of the accidental murder by someone up in a balcony donning a strange puppet mask. This voyeur soon begins to make attempts on the drummer's life and murder those around him. Violence and paranoia ensue as the audience is led closer and closer to the masked killer's identity with the only real hiccup in the film being the plot point referenced in the picture's title: the four flies on grey velvet is an image that has supposedly been burned on the retina of one of the killer's victims, the last image the victim saw before their death. Despite this notion of science fiction, "Four Flies" manages to stay away from conventions of that genre with a little suspension of disbelief in order to provide an effective and gory Giallo experience.



5 Dolls For An August Moon Poster (1970)

attempt, scaring off the black gloved killer with his unexpected presence. Convinced he witnessed something of importance, the writer begins to investigate the crime all while eluding the killer himself. *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* lacks the obscenely graphic violence that Argento's later Gialli would come to be known for, however, the emphases on style is certainly accented. The film lays down a foundation of fancy, extravagant set pieces and distinctly complex camera work that eventually become not only staples of the genre, but were nearly perfected by Argento himself in his later works. Argento had redefined the genre by furthering both the level of gore and fetishistic violence, a theme Bava had only touched on, leading to problems with international censors. Still, "Bird" was a tremendous success in Italy, although not immediately. The film managed to hang around the box office, but it was only after the incredible reaction to the film overseas, upon its American release, that Italian audiences began to flock out to see this sleeper hit. Obviously, success bred imitation and rather quickly for that matter - over the next five years, following the release of *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, no less than fifty Gialli made their way into cinemas! Argento's next two features were part of the aforementioned boom, and both released in 1971 to round out "The Animal Trilogy." *The Cat O' Nine Tails* and *Four Flies on Grey Velvet*. "Cat's" plot revolved around a reporter and blind man investigating a string of murders related to a bizarre break-in at a genetics laboratory where research is being performed that may link the tendency for criminal behavior to an XYY chromosome. The violence in *Cat* took a considerably more graphic approach than seen in "Bird," with two outstanding death scenes: a man pushed in front of a train to meet his brutal demise and the killer plummeting down the ropes of an elevator shaft while his hands are torn to shreds.



German B2 DVD release of Death-Camera & Cat (1971)

*Four Flies on Grey Velvet*, which is still currently awaiting a legitimate DVD



Region 2 Toso (1973) DVD Cover

Next to Argento, the most frequent contributor of quality work to the Giallo genre was Sergio Martino. The Italian director released five classic Gialli over just a couple of years at the height of the genre's boom. First came 1971's *The Strange Vice of Mrs. Wardh* (AKA, *Blade of the Ripper*), a murderous tale of sadomasochism starring Martino regular Edwige Fenech. The titular Mrs. Wardh, played by the gorgeous Fenech, becomes the obsession of none other than a black gloved murderer targeting young women, a murderer whom she believes to be one of her several past or present lovers. As the murder mystery unfolds, Mrs. Wardh's strange and erotic vices are revealed along with a suitable dash of violence, faked deaths, and ulterior motives. Martino's Gialli were of quite a different style than Argento's popular entries, focusing more on red herrings and double crossings. Most of Martino's Gialli contained multiple twist endings which revealed the multi-layered motives of the characters involved; in his films everyone is truly

a suspect. Although this could seemingly lead to plots becoming too convoluted for enjoyment, Martino managed to avoid this with solid casting and some of the more sophisticated writing found within this genre of film. Martino's Gialli also included a much more sexual tone than Argento's work, often drenched in nudity and heavy on eroticism.

Martino released another quintessential Giallo in 1971, *The Case of the Scorpion's Tail*. The film does not stray from Martino's template and deals with a murder spree



The Bird with the Crystal Plumage Poster (1970)



Sergio Martino's Torso (1976)

centered around a million dollar inheritance. What makes "Case" stand out from the pack is its lavish locales which include both London and Athens. Also worth noting is that the film includes two different killers, with entirely different motives, further enhancing the plot twists Martino was known for and providing quite the thrilling finale.

The next two Gialli by Sergio Martino, both released in 1972, reunited the director with dame Edwige Fenech. *All the Colors of the Dark* and *Your Vice is a Locked Room and Only I Have the Key*. Both films saw Martino begin to experiment beyond the genre boundaries he had developed for himself in his previous pictures. *All the Colors of the Dark* saw Martino begin to abandon some of his Giallo conventions for elements of the supernatural

(the film has a strong resemblance to *Rosemary's Baby*) along with less emphasis on whodunit style plotting. *Your Vice is a Locked Room and Only I Have the Key* also sees experimentation on the director's part, trading in the exotic set pieces for a more intimate setting. The film is probably the most sexually-charged of all Martino's gialli with underlines of incestuous desire. *Vice* also stands out for being a faithful adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's short story, "The Black Cat," obviously enhanced by more plot twists, murder, and seduction.

Martino further strayed from his patented Giallo format with 1973's *Torso*, *AKA: The Bodies Bear Traces of Carnal Violence*. Adopting more of an Argento-like approach, *Torso* trades in the soap opera for an additional dosage of grisly murder, although not as graphic as the title may lead one to hope. In many ways, *Torso* is the perfect segue between the Giallo and the slasher film. The red herrings are still present, but this time out Martino focuses more on a sense of dread and a rising body count of young ladies who are all pretty easy on the eyes to say the least. The killer wears a tight fitting ski mask along with a red and black scarf, the only



Luciano's Blade in the Dark (DVD) (1983)

true clue investigators trying to track down the maniac have to go on. As a troupe of college co-eds retreat from Rome to a countryside villa, the ski-masked murderer follows suit to make sure they never come back. Here Martino fully realizes the elements of suspense and tension that later lend themselves so well to the slasher genre. The killer also experiences flashbacks to his childhood in an attempt by Martino to add a bit of stylized subtext to the picture. *Torso* has since gone on to become a cult classic of Italian cinema and has been championed by such genre heavyweights as Robert Rodriguez and Eli Roth.

After taking a break for several years from the genre he helped to popularize, Argento made his triumphant return with

what many consider to be the greatest Giallo film of all time, *Deep Red*, *AKA: Profondo Rosso*. The film's plot centers around a pianist in Italy who witnesses the brutal murder of a woman claiming to have psychic abilities. Like Argento's other Gialli, the story is driven by the main character's search to unravel the mystery trapped within their memory, conflicted by the notion they've seen something of importance that may help identify the killer. Well written and oozing with style, *Deep Red* secured Argento's nickname as "the Italian Hitchcock." Of course, the film is not without the standard bloodshed associated with Argento's work.



The original one-sheet for Argento's *Deep Red* (1970)

The rain coat-wearing killer offers up several macabre acts of homicide including a graphic neck slicing with a shard of glass and a gruesome

bathtub face scalding. One of the more shocking, and memorable moments of the film occurs when a mechanical puppet comes shooting out of the shadows, serving as a distraction to a soon-to-be victim as the killer jolts from out-of-frame to exact an untimely end. The climax is one of the smartest the genre has to offer, playing off Argento's typical Giallo plot device of uncovering the mystery from within one's own mind, rather than relying solely on red herrings to advance the story. The finale delivers a abrupt and hyper violent demise for the film's black-gloved killer as her necklace becomes entangled between a moving elevator and its closed gaps, inevitably leading to a rather slow and unsettling decapitation. Another of *Deep Red*'s most appealing aspects, and one not to be overlooked, is the wonderful score performed by the musical group Goblin. An Italian progressive rock outfit headed by the brilliant Claudio Simonetti, Goblin were brought on board *Deep Red* after composer Giorgio Gaslini and director Dario Argento did not see eye to eye on the direction of the film's music. Although replacements, Goblin was able to produce one of the most classic cinematic scores in giallo history, fusing their prog rock sound with a heavy-handed influence of jazz. In fact, jazz music has always been a staple of the giallo. Argento had previously worked with

renowned composer Ennio Morricone for all three films in his *Animal Trilogy*, each with their own distinctly funky jazz arrangement and moody atmosphere. The music found in Giallo films typically included pulsing percussive arrangements. With such a distinct mixture of plot themes, it makes perfect sense that this genre of film would be just as much of a mixing pot musically as thematically.

## An Ageing Genre

One theme that did seem to govern the evolution of the Giallo genre was the ever rising excess of gore and sizzle found in the films, a progression which led to the birth of the slasher subgenre in the US in the late '70s. In the early years of the yellow genre



Luciano's House of the Weeping Windows (DVD) (1971)



Luciano's Beast with the Fiery Breath (DVD) (1971)

A STABBING NIGHTMARE BECOMES A VIVID FANTASY!



directors, such as Luciano Ercoli (*Death Walks at Midnight*), Udo Lado (*Who Saw Her Die?*), Lucio Fulci (*A Woman in a Lizard's Skin*), Emilio Miraglia (*The Night Evelyn Came Out of the Grave*), and Umberto Lenzi (*Eyeball*) delivered incredible films elevating the levels of mystery, gore violence and sleaze seen on screen. In the early '80s directors like Mario Bava's son Lamberto Bava (*A Blade in the Dark*), Ruggero Deodato (*Phantom of Death*), and Alberto De Martino (*Formula for a Murder*) dabbled in the genre if only briefly keeping it alive. Craftsmanship was increasingly tossed aside in favor of turning

a quick buck, since the Giallo formula had proven to be a box office success. More and more films were being churned out that lacked the style, lavish set pieces, and engaging storylines which were some of the key elements that previously elevated the genre to success. These characteristics were often traded in for rushed scripts containing shoddy special effects and increased nudity. A decent example is Andrea Bianchi's *Strip Nude for Your Killer*, a film which becomes victim to the aforementioned pitfalls and begins to show the evolution of a Giallo to a slasher. With a more confined locale (a convention which became a stereotypical aspect of the slasher genre) and an abundance of T&A, the film serves as a good example of the metamorphosis that was taking place in horror cinema. As the quality of the Giallo began its demise, Dario Argento made several attempts to resuscitate the suffocating genre. He released a pair of classics in the '80s: *Tenebre* (1982) and *Opera* (1987), both of which saw the director raising his trademark levels of gore and fetishistic violence to new heights and solidifying his legendary status as a true master of horror. Despite these solid outputs, the giallo was very much a dying genre. Although nearly every Italian director worked in the genre, by the time the late '80s rolled around almost every filmmaker had abandoned the concept altogether. Argento continued to make Gialli to varying degrees of success throughout the '90s and into the new millennium, with titles such as *Sleepless*, *The Card Player*, and *Do You Like Hitchcock?*

In fact, Argento is currently directing a new film entitled *Giallo*. A homage to the genre which made him famous, *Giallo* is set to star Emmanuelle Seigner and Oscar-winner Adrien Brody.

#### Modern Influences

Horror has always evolved, much like *Me*, it finds a way to survive. Nobody knows this better than Hollywood, and while horror may have not have been created here in America, no other country has

done more to keep it alive. It is a genre that can always be turned to by low budget filmmakers and profiteers to turn a quick buck. The slasher subgenre (a product of the Giallo) is a perfect example of a style of horror filmmaking still alive and quite profitable today (*Prom Night* remake). It dates back over three decades, of course that all depends on whether you feel *Psycho* or *Black Christmas* was the first true slasher film in history. Never the less the Giallo's bastard son has lived a far richer life than its forefather ever did. Not to say horror has always been both popular and profitable with the masses. If it were not for the home video invasion of the '80s and



The iconic still we used for Argento's *Opera*

DVD in the '90s (and a little title called *Scream* in the late '90s), it is possible we may not be experiencing the large scale mainstream success and popularity the genre is celebrating today. It is funny to think it took a Giallo-styled slasher to save the very subgenre it created back in '86. Ironically *Scream* is more a Giallo making fun of its slasher offspring than a slasher taking stabs at itself. If not for its modern slasher sensibilities, big budget, and lack of sexuality, it could easily be considered a modern Giallo. *Scream* even gave birth to its own offspring, dubbed the "teen slasher." Proving again the influence of the yellow genre had not all disappeared from US shores. However, the Giallo had a much larger influence on earlier filmmakers, such as Brian De Palma. His early '80s horror themed thrillers *Dressed to Kill*, *Sisters*, and *Body Double* remain perfect examples of the Italian Giallo influence seen in American cinema. Exuding both the visual style and classic sensibilities of what earned the

genre such respect. The lines between horror and the Giallo have always been blurred, especially with titles such as *Don't Look Now*, *Alien*, *Sweet Alien*, and even *Saw*, proving this conundrum totally understandable.

Will we ever see a resurgence in the yellow genre? That all depends on articles such as this generating renewed interest in the genre and the success of

Dario Argento's upcoming homage film *Giallo*. Just remember there are over two-hundred Giallo titles out there begging to be rediscovered by both a younger and older generation of Horrorfiends. In fact, for those with region-free DVD players, the variety of Giallo films available is nearly boundless. So if you are tired of the endless string of bad remakes being released today, and think you have seen all that the horror industry has to offer, simply wrap your mind around a sleazy yet challenging whodunit murder mystery, play the role of the armchair detective while enjoying some vintage violence and gore. Ciao for now!

Special thanks to Jon Kelley, Michael Bannister, and Don Gibba



A scene from *Black Belly of the Tarantula* displays a perfect fusion of both horror and sexuality ever-present within the genre, while *A Bay of Blood* (below) exhibits a gory death sequence later homaged in Friday the 13th and other slashers of the 80s



Ruggero Deodato's *Phantom of Death* (AKA *Off Balance*, 1980) VHS



**Fun Fact:** Dario Argento founded a memorabilia store in Rome named *Profondo Rosso* (Deep Red) after the film's title. The cellar host a collection of props from his past movie exploits and is managed by fellow director Luigi Cozzi.

# HALLOWEEN

## 30 Years After The Night HE Came Home!

### A HORRORHOUND RETROSPECTIVE

#### Halloween: The Night He Came Home!

Evil never dies - and neither does the appeal of John Carpenter's seminal horror classic, *Halloween*. Shot on a minuscule budget of \$320,000 in the spring of 1978 and released in the fall of that same year, *Halloween* carved its way through the box office as audiences received their first taste of "the night he came home" - he, referring of course to the "boogeyman" himself, Michael Myers. The film's success quickly ushered in the most famous of horror subgenres, the slasher flick, inspiring countless knockoffs and imitations in the decade that followed. Though some of these films proved to endure the test of time, to this day *Halloween* remains the quintessential slasher film and is near and dear to the black hearts of HorrorHounds around the world.

Believe it or not, *Halloween* started off as a work-for-hire. Riding the success of his debut feature, *Assault on Precinct 13*, John Carpenter was offered the chance at full creative control on a low-budget picture with the working title of *The Babysitter Murders*. After a bit of research, producer Irwin Yablans discovered the word, *Halloween* had never been used in a film's title before. Feeling that tying in the concept of babysitters being offed by a killer with the lure of Halloween night would be a successful combination, the film's title was changed to simply *Halloween*.

The film begins on Halloween night, 1963, in the fictitious town of Haddonfield, Illinois. In a scene of voyeuristic terror, the audience sees a teenage girl and her boyfriend being sped on through the windows of her home. The duo quickly ventures upstairs for some of the quickest off-camera sex in cinema history at which point the boyfriend leaves poor Judith Myers naked, vulnerable, and all alone in her bedroom. In what appears to be an extremely long point-of-view shot, but actually includes a couple of well-placed cuts, Judith is stabbed repeatedly by her little brother Michael. Although some claim the opening shot had already been introduced several years earlier in Bob Clark's *Black Christmas*, Carpenter and crew certainly offered up an innovative twist on the concept by taking the audience behind the killer's mask.

The film then skips forward to October 30th, 1978, where Myers has just escaped from Smith's Grove Sanitarium and begins his journey back to Haddonfield to do more than a little trick or treating. Donald Pleasance provides a stunning performance as Dr. Sam Loomis, the psychiatrist who hunts down his escaped mental patient in Van Helsing-esque fashion. Pleasance offered a bit of credibility to the film which was otherwise comprised of young, fledgling filmmakers and their friends. Pleasance's portrayal of Loomis is serious in tone, yet manages to provide a hint of mad-



The original 1978 US one-sheet for *Halloween*

ness resulting from the predicament that has befallen him on that fateful Halloween night. The role was never actually written with Donald Pleasance in mind. In fact, the part was offered to Hammer horror vets Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee, both of who turned down the opportunity.

The character of Michael Myers, otherwise known as "the Shape," was actually portrayed by quite a few different people during filming. During the opening POV scene, the audience only sees Myers's hands as he makes his way through his home en route to his initial act of homicide. Little Michael was played by a woman here, as it is actually writer/producer Debra Hill's hands we see on-screen. When we briefly see six-year-old Michael, he is played by Wil Sandin. The adult Myers is played by several folks, though it is believed that most of the Boogeyman's screen time is courtesy of Nick Castle. Tony Moran takes over the role of the unmasked Myers during his grapple with Laurie Strode while editor/production designer Tommy Lee Wallace and stuntman Jim Winburn also don the infamous Myers mask during particular scenes.

As previously mentioned, *Halloween* was filmed in the spring despite its autumn setting. However, this wasn't the only problem facing production since the fictitious Midwest locale of Haddonfield, Illinois had to be recreated in Pasadena, California. The cast and crew worked together to paint paper leaves which were then blown on screen by giant fans or scattered across the streets and lawns for particular shots. Due to the tight budget, all of the leaves had to be raked up after a shot was completed and re-used for the duration of production. Although the leaves do a suitable job of tricking the audience into believing a fall setting, those with a sharp eye will spot numerous green leaves and palm trees throughout the picture.

As Halloween day turns into night, Myers proceeds to creep around his hometown as he stalks a trio of high school girls. Lynda van der Klok (PJ Soles), Annie Brackett (Nancy Loomis), and Laurie Strode (Jamie Lee Curtis). As Laurie and Annie spend their Halloween night babysitting, Lynda is literally off screwing around. In one of the film's most memorable scenes, Lynda becomes unnerved when her boyfriend returns to the bedroom dead silent and sporting a white ghost outfit with glasses. Little does she know that her boyfriend is actually shack downstairs (to the wall with a butcher knife), and that the ghostly shape in her room is that of Michael Myers, showing off a



Japanese movie program for *Halloween*





An assortment of home video releases for Halloween, both VHS and Laserdisc to DVD, not to mention the original vinyl soundtrack

sense of humor that is only briefly alleviated in the film. Lynda decides to call up Laurie, but is attacked from behind by the Shape. Michael proceeds to strangle a struggling and gasping Lynda with the telephone cord while Laurie sitters, confused and scared, on the other end of the line. The scene has gone on to become one of the most memorable in the entire series and is in stark contrast to what most of today's horror audiences consider memorable. Whereas films like *Hotel* have relied heavily on gore and an audience's gag reflex, *Halloween* remains an essentially bloodless film.

Annie is the next to fall victim to the Boogeyman, with Laurie then left as his only remaining prey, despite that no explanation for his infatuation with the teenage girl is ever given to the viewer. Part of the lasting appeal of the Myers character in the original *Halloween* is that he is not the evil incarnation of a superhuman comic book character, but rather an average-sized, silent sociopath who really could exist. The film does not elude to any supernatural pretenses until, arguably, the finale where Dr. Loomis shoots Myers six times. Myers falls off a balcony, and when Loomis rushes out to check on Michael, there isn't a corpse to be found. Despite this, Loomis does not appear surprised.

The film's script called for Loomis to appear shocked; however, during filming Pleasance proposed that Loomis act as if he knew this would happen. This take on the finale was shot, and Carpenter ultimately used it in the final version, providing a much creepier ending than originally conceived.

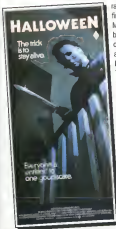
*Halloween* arguably boasts the greatest score in the history of horror films, and is most certainly a key asset to the picture's success. Composed and performed by John Carpenter, the score is a spine-tingler that is vital to setting the mood and atmosphere of *Halloween*. Carpenter has credited Goblin's score from Dario Argento's 1975 Giallo classic *Deep Red*

as one of the main sources of inspiration for the film's music. From its droning tenors to its piercing cues, the score both accentuates and dictates the terror taking place on screen. In the past, Carpenter has been quoted as saying that without the music, *Halloween* is not a scary film. In many respects, the *Halloween* theme was as important to the film as Michael Myers himself.

*Halloween* was an astounding box office success, grossing \$47 million domestically and around \$60 million worldwide. Despite the amazing numbers, the film was not an overnight success. It opened the week prior to *Halloween* in 1978 in Kansas City and moved to various cities thereafter on a platform release. As more showings sold out, more prints were sent around the country, and eventually the world. *Halloween* went on to become the highest grossing independent film of all time up until that point, a title which it held until 1990 when *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* stormed the box office and dethroned the slasher classic. Obviously with the incredible financial success of *Halloween*, this was not the last time the world would see Michael Myers...after all, you can't kill the Boogeyman!

## Halloween II

The return to Haddonfield, *Halloween II*, was written by John Carpenter and Debra Hill, and picks up where its predecessor left off. After originally considering to set the sequel a few years after the events of *Halloween*, in a high-rise apartment building, the decision was made to instead jump right back into the in-progress storyline left off from the original film. To do that, Jamie Lee Curtis was brought back, returning to her role as victim-babysitter Laurie Strode. To her surprise (as well as many others), after the massive success of the original *Halloween*, Jamie was expected to move up as one of the new young starlets in cinema. What she was met with instead was bit roles in television series. It took John Carpenter's next theatrical feature to get Jamie her next leading role, this time in 1980's *The Fog*. After *Prom Night*, *Terror Train*, and *Roadgames*, it was in 1981 before



Sets of both Australian and German lobby cards for the original Halloween. Also shown on this page is an Australian daybill poster, German one-sheet poster, souvenir cap, and the original novelization of Halloween

**Quotable Quote:** "You must be ready for him... If you don't, it's your funeral!" - Donald Pleasance (*Halloween*)

HorrorHound



# HALLOWEEN



Halloween II reached theaters and it took three more years before Trading Places, Jamie's breakthrough out of horror).

Besides Jamie, Donald Pleasence returned as Dr. Sam Loomis, to continue his search for his escaped-patient. With a virtual newbie, Rick Rosenthal hired to direct (a job originally offered to former Myers-actor Tommy Lee Wallace), the film began production. What made Halloween II such an interesting sequel is the fact that the story picks up quite literally where its predecessor left off. Michael Myers was shot six times by Dr. Loomis, and has disappeared after falling through a window. Laurie is taken to the local hospital in Haddonfield where she unwittingly awaits

Michael's vengeful return. What happens next is a gradual hunt for the white-masked killer, as Loomis and the local police force are in over their heads, and Myers (with knife-in-hand) slowly makes his way to the hospital housing Laurie, eventually murdering every nurse, orderly, and guard in

Dick Warlock was brought in to take over the role of Michael Myers. The story goes, that Deborah Hill had stored the original film's mask in a shoebox at her home (under her bed). That same mask was used throughout the shooting, taken home by Dick at the end of filming (where it stayed with his person for the next twenty years). Dick wore lifts in order to appear taller during filming, but was a key choice for the role considering his background in stunts, to date having worked in over one hundred films (including Jaws, Commando and Pumpkinhead, just to name a few). By the end of the film John Carpenter's plan was enacted which resulted in a fiery finale and death for both Michael Myers and Doctor Loomis. It most definitely was not their final moments on-screen, but at the time, it seemed concrete that the Boogeyman was gone for good.

The final product was viewed too tame, and actually saw reshoots by the hands of John Carpenter, who filmed additional gore sequences, against Rosenthal's wishes. It was reported that Carpenter felt the movie could not compete against the slasher (or splatter) films that permeated cinemas and video stores during the early '80s. What was interesting about Halloween II wasn't just that there were alternate takes and shoots taken for the sequel, but for the original film as well. Footage linking Laurie Strode as Michael Myers' long-lost little-sister was shot linking a new storyline developed for the sequel. Extra footage was also shot for the

original film's ending. When the original film was shown on television, this footage was used to help beef up the story and connect the two films more so. Now Myers had a reason behind his insistent goal of hunting down Laurie. As he did in the opening scene of the original Halloween, Michael must kill his sister, apparently at all costs. Since then, this "TV" version has become available on home video. The alternate version of the sequel was shown on television and is rare, containing an ending in which Jimmy (The Last Starfighter's Lance Guest; who plays an ambulance driver) survives along with Laurie—often dubbed the

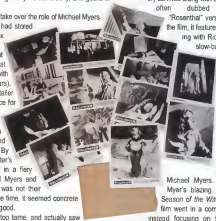
"Rosenthal" version of the film. It features less gore, more in keep-

ing with Rick's first cut of the film. Rick always felt his movie was a slow-burn scare-fest, whereas the "Carpenter" cut was more of a gore-fest. As a matter of fact, there are dozens of purported alternate takes and extra scenes that exist, waiting for an eventual (hopefully) special edition DVD of this sequel (the cut TV version was planned for release at one point, but still has yet to see light of day!).

Released in 1981, this \$2.5 million budgeted sequel amassed an impressive \$25.5 million at the box office. While it wasn't as big of a hit as the original film, the numbers were still solid for such a small horror entry. Due to the nature of the film's ending, however, it was decided to allow Halloween to continue in a new direction, without

Michael Myers. Just one year after Myer's blazing finale, Halloween III: Season of the Witch was released. The film went in a completely new direction, instead focusing on the masks revolving around the haunted holiday, as a mad mask-maker plans on mass-murdering millions of children on Halloween night... To get a full scoop on this installment in the Halloween series we urge you to check out HorrorHound #8, as we featured the film in its own HorrorHound retrospective.

At this point, the Halloween series was not a licensing giant, nor was this the era of



Halloween: Purified Gory Goodness by Jon St. Pierre

Released in 1983 by Wizard Games for its Atari 2600, the same company who put out the Texas Chainsaw Massacre video game, Halloween is one of the rated game cartridges on the Atari market. Based off the movie, you play as a babysitter (Laurie Strode, but never mentioned), and your goal is to save the kids you're babysitting by placing them in rooms before Michael Myers gets to them.

The controls are pretty basic as you walk left to right, up and down stairs, you also able to wield a knife to defend yourself from Myers as well. The two keys points to this game is that, much like Texas Chainsaw Massacre, it was considered for too violent for its time and most retailers wouldn't stock it. If in fact they did, they kept it behind the counter which led to very poor sales. The other point was, that it is a very gory game. Michael Myers actually kills the kids if you can't reach them in time, and even funnier than that is the fact, if you get killed, your character gets decapitated and nuts around with blood gushing out of its neck. After a while you'll be playing the game just to see that animation.

A big highlight for the game was whenever Michael Myers was on screen. They would play the Halloween Theme, Atari style, but that however got annoying extremely fast. Towards the end, Wizard Games stopped printing labels for their cartridges instead simply writing "Halloween" on the game with an orange marker to cut down production costs, but even that couldn't stop the demise of the company's gaming division. Overall, with annoying sounds and poor game play, Halloween for the Atari 2600 is still one of the most sought after collectibles by both gamers and horror geeks alike.



horror-licensing giants. However, there were some key items out there for the film, such as a Don Post "Shape" mask which was for sale at haunted stores during the fall season, while official film novels in bookstores, and soundtracks available on vinyl, cassette and eventually CD were also available. In 1983 an Atari video game was released, courtesy of Wizard Games, an extremely limited supply (see included article). Outside of this, the majority of collectibles for Halloween and Halloween II are made up of movie posters (foreign and domestic), lobby cards, and press kits. Various versions of Halloween are available on home video, ranging from standard VHS copies of the film made available over the years (including the TV version of the original movie) and a special anniversary snap-case featuring a Halloween keychain. Aside from this, a laserdisc of the film was made available before the DVD format became prevalent in the late '90s. Since 1997 Anchor Bay Home Video has pushed out no less than seven versions of Halloween onto DVD, including a rare special edition in 1999 (which included both theatrical and television versions of the film) and a packed "Divimax" release in 2003.



The original 1987 US one-sheet for Halloween II



young screenwriter Alan B. McElroy to pen the script.

As with all things in Hollywood however, there was a caveat. When McElroy was hired, the Writers' Guild was just days away from striking. The entire movie making industry was about to be shut down, and Akkad and Little wanted their script before that happened. With no more than eleven days to accomplish his task, McElroy sat down and hammered out the entire story, handing it in mere hours before his deadline.

The need to work quickly, in hindsight, may have actually aided the storytelling process because Halloween 4 ended up being a classy, old school affair focusing on only a few characters and generating real suspense. It dealt with a little girl by the name of Jamie Lloyd, revealed in the opening moments to be Laurie Strode's (Jamie Lee Curtis) daughter. After Laurie's death (presumably killed in a car accident some time between Halloween 2 and 4), Jamie was adopted by the Carnuthers family in Haddonfield.

Michael Myers (since the hospital fire seen at the end of Halloween II) has spent ten years in a coma. When some orderlies attempt to transport Michael Myers to a different facility on the night before Halloween, he awakens (when one of the medical workers mentions that he has a niece), causing an accident, and he disappears. Dr. Loomis, horribly scarred (but not dead) from his last encounter with Myers, stays hot on his trail and is convinced that he's headed back to Haddonfield to murder the last of his bloodline. He arrives in Haddonfield and is quickly greeted by skepticism from new Sheriff Ben Meeker, even though it soon becomes apparent to everyone that Michael has indeed returned.

During casting, Little was immediately drawn to child actress Danielle Harris. Casting the role would be crucial to the success of the film, and Harris's audition gave Little the confidence he needed to hire her. Harris was then paired with another young unknown actress named Elle Cornell, chosen to play the teenage daughter, Rachel, of the Carnuthers. The cast was rounded out by Donald Pleasence, resuming his role as Dr. Loomis and Beau Starr as the town's gruff Sheriff Meeker. Michael Myers was played this time around by veteran stuntman George Wilbur and Tom Morga. The decision to hire Wilbur was made due to the nature of the script, which involved several complicated stunt sequences.



Shown on opposite page: A German film program for Halloween, a press kit photo collection from the original movie's release, a Japanese Halloween II classic, and a Spanish movie poster for Halloween II

Shown on this page (top to bottom): Halloween II memorabilia including a German program, foreign movie poster, original film reevaluation, vinyl soundtrack, home video and laserdisc release of the film, and an original set of US lobby cards for Halloween II





# HALLOWEEN



Instead of being filmed in California like the first two films, the production on Halloween 4 was moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. The main reason for this was because of the young age of the film's star Danielle Harris. The child labor laws in California were very strict due to the high volume of child actors there. In Salt Lake, the lax laws allowed Harris to work for longer hours, something that was necessary due to the limited budget the crew was working with.

Shooting was tough for several reasons. Since it was spring time, all the trappings of fall in the Midwest had to be manufactured. Leaves were trucked in from elsewhere and giant squashes were painted orange to resemble pumpkins. Several of the stunt sequences proved perilous for cast and crew as well. In a scene that is iconic amongst horror fans, a lumbering Michael stalks Rachel and Jamie on the rooftop of Sheriff Meeker's home. Although shot on a sound stage, the scene still proved dangerous for Elle Cornell, who slid down the tiles and caught her torso on a nail, creating a large gash. Being a trooper, she was bandaged up, and was back on set the very same day.



The original 1988 US one-sheet for Halloween 4



Shown on this page: Original Halloween IV novelization, three teen-novels featuring Michael Myers, and (below) French poster for Part 4

Following weekend as well, helping fans celebrate the holiday which gave the film its name. Its total domestic gross ended up at over \$17 million, almost quadrupling the film's meager production costs of only \$5 million.

Although it is wrongly dismissed by some as just another slasher sequel in the late '80s, Halloween 4 is high atop many fans' lists of favorites in the series. The film avoids the clichés of most other slashers of the time, and delivers something that even John Carpenter himself could be proud of. In addition, the film counts director Quentin Tarantino among its many fans, which speaks volumes about its quality. As the drunken preacher says during weekend as well, helping fans celebrate the holiday which gave the film its name. Its total domestic gross ended up at over \$17 million, almost quadrupling the film's meager production costs of only \$5 million.

to Sam Loomis on his way to Haddonfield, "You can't kill damnation Meier... it don't



Over the years there have been multiple versions of licensed (and non-licensed) Michael Myers masks released at retail. While no single mask has ruled the list of the original film's screen-used "Captain Jack" (licensed mask, above) is an assortment of what we have been offered at retail. In 1985 Don Post studios released what they call "The Mask" which was a non-licensed white standard which resembled Myers enough to warrant Halloween fans to purchase. This same mask was made available multiple times over the years, in a declining degree of quality. Rivalry Concepts' Cinema Secrets and Robco also later released a number of masks based on Myers from various lines (licensed and non-licensed). Licensed masks were actually rolled out at various points in time throughout the last 30 years claiming copyright infringement on license holders and lawsuits alike, causing a complete guide to Myers masks over the years virtually impossible (shown above is just an example of what has been made available). After Halloween, the license for Halloween went back to Don Post studios who rolled out a number of masks at different price points and targeted at different age groups. Costumes, props and items are constantly being produced every Halloween season as well.

In the film, after being stalked by her uncle, Jamie is saved by the local townsfolk when Michael is "put down" by a barrage of bullets, falling into an abandoned mine shaft which collapses on him, made short when deputies throw dynamite down the shaft thus sealing his doom... back at the Carnuthers house, a shocking sequence results when the young Jamie emerges from the upstairs bathroom wearing a clown mask, with a blood-soaked knife in hand (having just attacked her mother), insinuating that she has defied the curse young Myers succumbed to in the original film.

Halloween 4 was destined to be a success from the start, if only because the horror consuming public had been waiting for Myers's triumphant return ever since the (in their eyes) disappointing story-line of Season of the Witch. This enthusiasm for the story was proved on opening weekend, when Halloween 4: The Return of Michael Myers made \$6.4 million, landing at number one on the box office charts. The film maintained its hold on the number one spot the fol-



die like a man dies." There is perhaps no more fitting a line to describe The Return of Michael Myers.

## Halloween 5: The Revenge of Michael Myers

In 1989, soon after the successful return of Michael Myers, the crew behind the Halloween franchise quickly turned their focus on keeping the series moving forward. Almost exactly one year after its predecessor hit theaters, Halloween 5 was released, continuing the saga of Jamie Lloyd. Ironically set one year after the last film left off, Jamie has been moved into a children's hospital where she is now being treated by Dr. Loomis, stricken a mute since her last confrontation with her uncle Mike... Michael himself has spent the past year recovering from wounds while in a coma, being taken care of by a crazy old coot who is rewarded with a sharp object in his person upon Michael's awakening. Going after Jamie once again, Michael leaves a trail of terror and may/hom behind him, but for this film the director tried to go a little deeper into who Michael is - or what made him the



Boogeyman. A mysterious stranger (or the Man in Black) has come to investigate Myers and Lloyd, a story arc that never develops or is explained, but has caused quite the stir amongst fans and theorists. While the character was never fleshed out in this installment, he was later given more back story that revealed

him to be one Dr. Wynn, who worked at the same clinic as Dr. Loomis. Background injected that he was the one who taught Michael how to drive, and a mysterious tattoo on his arm is shared by Michael as well, and is called the Curse of the Thorn. More on that in Halloween 666!

As for the story at hand, with Michael out of his coma, he soon goes on a killing spree which starts off with the death of Ellie Cornell's character, Rachel. Not the best decision in the world, Moustapha Akkad had even stated later that he regretted not keeping Rachel around a little longer, as her death mirrored a "Psycho" effect, of killing off a supposed key character at the beginning of the movie. As for the rest of the film, Myers' niece, Jamie, was teamed up with an annoying child by the name of Billy (Jeffrey Landman), resulting in a cat and mouse chase film involving kids. That's not to say there weren't a good number of annoying teens thrown in for good measure. The movie was shot, again, in Salt Lake City, Utah, but for some reason the Myers house used in the film prior was not the same shown in this movie. As a matter of fact, the Myers house in Part 5 didn't resemble any other version of Myers's home, instead it appeared to be a dilapidated mansion... The final product was rushed, with story arcs not fully realized (such as a telepathic connection Jamie supposedly held with Michael), and the film wasn't met with as much love from the fans who helped make Halloween 4 such a hit, and the box office receipts showed - the film opened with just over \$6 million in returns, on par with its predecessor, but it eventually earned only \$11 million total in the US. Considering the film's budget (just \$5 million) this was still a success, but in comparison, it seemed to have



The original 1989 US one-sheet for Halloween 5

ing those elements into the film. Reportedly there was never a Man in Black in the original script, and that there was a real man in black who looked very much like the character in the final film who was seen just hanging around on the streets watching the filming of the movie. As said by Danielle Harris, remembering the incident, everyone thought he was really creepy, especially the director who, after watching him, came up with the idea during filming to add the "character" into the story without having any real purpose to the character. That is why the character never made any sense and is totally out of place. But with Dominique gone and the desire for another Halloween entry ever present, Akkad took a meeting with a young screenwriter named Daniel Farrands. Farrands had been a fan of the Halloween series all of his life, and knew the myths like the back of his hand.

Farrands was a young struggling screenwriter at the time and this was his big break. He walked into the office carrying a thick, shiny folder of ideas to pitch with the moniker Halloween 666 emblazoned on the cover. He had done extensive research not only on the Halloween series, but on the ancient Celtic rituals involved in the holiday itself. Akkad loved what Farrands brought to the table, but legal issues involving distribution for the film (it was during this time that the Halloween franchise and sequel rights were sold to Disney's sister-label, Miramax Films, via its Dimension Films division) which meant that Halloween 6 as well as Farrands' ideas, would sit on the shelf for

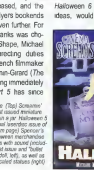
taken a step down in contrast to expectations. Released in 1989, the slasher genre was already considered deceased, and the fall of Michael Myers bookends that statement even further. For this film Don Shanks was chosen to play the Shape, Michael Myers, while directing duties were given to French filmmaker Dominique Othenet-Girard (The Omen IV). Jumping immediately into making Part 5 has since

Shown on this page (Top) Scream's Movie Kit, Don Post issued miniature Michael Myers mask on a per Halloween 5 shot glass, and original lavender issue of Halloween 5. (Bottom page) Spencer's Gifts exclusive Halloween merchandise ranging from 18" dolls with sound (including the standard first issue and "bullet hole" second issue doll, left), as well as medium, and large sized statues (right)

been said to be a mistake. The sequel should have been more thought-out and given time to develop, but with horror, these mistakes happen... again and again.

## Halloween 6: The Curse of Michael Myers

Production on Halloween 6. The Curse of Michael Myers began in 1990, just one year after the critical and commercial failure of Halloween 5, a film that was rushed into multiplexes too quickly on the heels of its predecessor. The producers, including first timer Malek Akkad (son of Moustapha), had a tall order ahead of them. The biggest problem with this - some would say cursed - film from the start was that any writer brought in to tackle the project had to deal with the confusing "Man in Black" myths introduced in the previous entry. The fifth film in the franchise ended with Myers, in jail, being "broken out" thanks to the Man in Black. Contrary to popular belief, the producers had no idea where they wanted the story to go before writing began. In fact, all accounts from the production of Halloween 5 were that the director, Dominique Girard, was almost singlehandedly responsible for inject-



# HALLOWEEN



Both costumes and props labeled with the Halloween name have been made available throughout the past two decades, and show no signs of slowing down.

almost five years. During that time, Akkad reportedly had brought in at least two other sets of writers in order to try and develop Faramand's work further, but neither set worked out.

Fast forward to 1994. "The Curse" had a production date and no script to shoot, so Akkad remembered Faramand's folder of ideas and contacted the writer. With a limited amount of time, Faramand started writing a draft of *Halloween 6*. This is where the seeds of what we see onscreen today started to germinate.

The first major changes in Faramand's vision began soon afterwards, when Danielle Harris, the child star of the previous two sequels, dropped out of the production. Accounts as to why are conflicting, but the general consensus seems to be that the studio was only willing to offer her a weekly rate for her services. She was understandably upset by this, considering that she had been the star of the previous two films, and so she eventually decided to walk from the production. Faramand's script had her as a much more integral character, so this was the first major change that had to be made. The Jamie Lloyd character was reduced to a small role in the beginning, and an unknown actress was cast to fill Harris's shoes.

Once director Joe Chappelle had his pass at the script, things began to change further. He liked Faramand's take on the mythology, but felt that it needed to go even further, explaining Michael's origins. This is where the confusing nature of the final film began to take shape. To sum it up as simply as possible, the sixth *Halloween* film picks up after Michael has escaped from the clutches of the Thom cult, as he attempts to track down Jamie Lloyd's baby so he can destroy the last of his bloodline. Other characters in the film include a family related to the Strodes who are living in the old Myers House, and a grown-up Tommy Doyle (played by Paul Rudd) who is obsessed with finding Michael Myers. Donald Pleasance also makes his final appearance in the series, sharing a handful of scenes with Mitch Ryan, taking over the role of Doctor Wynn. Several complications arose during filming. Tragically, Donald Pleasance passed away on February 2nd, 1995, near the end of production due to complications from a heart valve replacement surgery. His death forced several more tough decisions to be made regarding the plot. The original ending, which required Loomis to be alive for a sequel, had to be reshot to accommodate the tragedy. George Wilbur, who had returned from *Halloween 4* to play Michael, wasn't used in the film's reshoots, as production decided to recast Myers with stunt coordinator, Fred Lerner's son, A. Michael Lerner. However there were no hard feelings, and George did play on the stunt crew for the reshoots. In fact, he can be seen as a doctor being thrown into a glass case by Myers during the operating room



The original 1990 US one-sheet for Halloween 6

massacre scene. In addition to filming all of the hospital footage, A. Michael Lerner also reshot all of the added gore scenes which included Jamie Lloyd and John Strode's deaths to name a few. The end result is a skinner Michael appearing throughout several scenes towards the end of the film.

Through a series of further rewrites and directorial decisions, the final cut of *Halloween 6: The Curse of Michael Myers* devolved in a convoluted mess of plot points that even the most dedicated fans have yet to make sense of. Curses, the Thom Cult, and even hints of genetic engineering render the film nearly incomprehensible. Some fans also take issue with Chappelle's style, which was far removed from the understated aesthetics of Carpenter's original. *Halloween 6* is a loud, frantically edited movie that has been described by many as "*Halloween on Acid*." Dimension studios, known for their post production tinkering, no doubt had their own hand in contributing to the mess.

The final product limped into theaters on October 1st, 1995. In the five years since development had begun, the world of horror cinema had changed remarkably. Horror slashers were no longer big bank at the box office, and the subgenre was still one year away from being reawakened with Wes Craven's *Scream*. Despite the perception that it was a failure, *Halloween 6* did actually manage to pull in over \$8 million in its opening weekend, more than making back its budget of \$5 million. It dropped off considerably after that, however, ended up only grossing \$15 million total in the US.

Shortly after its release, a fabled "Producer's Cut" was leaked to the public. Consisting of one of the original outs of the film, the Producer's Cut restores Carpenter's musical cues (which were eschewed in favor of heavy metal in the theatrical cut) and attempts to restore some sense to the plot by adding in several cut scenes. Most notable of these are several dialogue exchanges with Loomis and Wynn, further explaining Wynn's involvement with the Thom Cult. The film also shows the original ending, which features Paul Rudd's character stopping Michael with Rune ties, followed by Wynn inflicting Loomis with the Thom symbol, and therefore the curse of being Michael's protector. Copies of this version of the film (in varying qualities) have circulated on eBay for years, and it has become the true cut of *Halloween 6* to many fans. Despite endless petitions (the latest one started by Faramand herself), Dimension has yet to release this version officially onto home video.

It was around this time as well that merchandising became a larger focus at retail, as more and more *Halloween* inspired products began leaking onto store shelves. A limited VHS set that included a water-globe portraying Laurie Strode and Michael Myers became available (thanks to Anchor Bay), and Spencer's Gifts, who has always housed a healthy selection of horror goodies (ranging from *Child's Play* to *Tales from the Crypt*), began issuing exclusive dolls and statues based on various horror characters, which did include Michael Myers. Samples of these items can be seen littered throughout this article!

Shown on this page: Original *Halloween* release for *Halloween 6*; a *Halloween* snow globe, which came packaged with a VHS copy of the original film; and McFarlane Toys' *Movie Masterpiece* Michael Myers action figures in both 18" and 7" forms





## HALLOWEEN H20



### Halloween H20: 20 Years Later

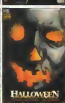
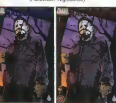
As mentioned earlier, it was around 1991 when Disney's Dimension Studios had acquired the rights to the Halloween series, and after the success of 1996's *Scream* and later-similar projects, Dimension was looking towards past-proven successes to help keep



The original 1996 US one-sheet for Halloween H20



Shown on this page: German program for H20; identical release of film, and foreign theater standee (left right) Cineplex complete series of Halloween comic books, including all variants (ranging from color-for-to glow-in-the-dark) Also shown are the H20 Dimension cover one-sheet releases of Halloween Returns to Haddonfield official souvenir magazine (left) CD, and Autograph H20 DVD-inclusive comic Autograph and One Good Scare written by Sam Hainsworth (Halloween: Nightdance)



had been murdered by a returning Myers, Jamie became unhinged, drinking more often and scared for her and her son's lives. Of course Michael learns of Laurie's fake-death and soon comes calling. What happens next is a standard stalk and slash storyline that takes place in a fenced-in boarding school during spring break - with only minimal characters still on-hand (coincidentally, two of which are Laurie and her son).



Some of the acting talents that were added for extra teen appeal included Michelle Williams (Dawson's Creek), Joseph Gordon-Levitt (Third Rock from the Sun), rapper LL Cool J, and even a slick cameo by Jamie Lee's mom, Janet Leigh (Psycho). Lastly, Steve Miner (Friday the 13th Part 2 and 3) was attached to direct, after John Carpenter (who had been eying the job) backed out at the beginning stages of the project. In the final script, Jamie Lee Curtis wished to erase the continuity created from the fourth-thru-sixth entries in the Halloween franchise, and the Jamie Lloyd back story

was dismissed. The film was built up as a huge new outing for Myers (who was played this time by Chris Durand), with Curtis and a crew of teen sensations, the film received much publicity, even appearing on the cover of Entertainment Weekly. Sadly, most of the publicity was based around the actors and not the masked-killer that the film actually revolved around. Apparently the film was better business for anyone not named Myers. Amusingly it is Myers who had a small amount of controversy in this film as no-less than four different masks were used in the movie, making the look of the iconic killer more and more confusing. Since Myers' return in Halloween 4, there has yet to be a screen-used mask that captures the eeriness of the original two features. The issue was exacerbated with this new film installment (CGI was even used in some parts of the film to cover up "bad" masks). If the mask problem wasn't enough, H20 happens to also be the only film in the franchise to not use the iconic John Carpenter-created Halloween music, and also happens to be the only film in the series not to take place in Haddonfield, IL (and is the first in the series to not include the late-Dr. Loomis) which led many fans to state that the film doesn't feel like it truly belongs in the series. Despite all this, the film, dubbed *Halloween H20: 20 Years Later*, opened everywhere on August 5th, 1998. Its initial weekend at the box office culled over \$16 million, almost double that of the



# HALLOWEEN



1985 predecessor. In the end, "H20" banked just over \$55 million, making it the most successful theatrical run of all the Halloween films. Helping matters, it was around this time that Todd McFarlane, producer of the white-hot Movie Menace action figure line, had incorporated the Myers character into the series, placing the Boogeyman into mall stores and instating a new run of merchandise for the character that included statues, dolls, comic books, and so much more! Myers had taken his place alongside Voorhees and Krueger as one of the most licensed horror characters of the modern film era. With all this buzz, a follow-up to H20 was inevitable.

## Halloween: Resurrection

Halloween: Resurrection easily earned its distinction as the worst entry in the series and for one very good reason. Back in 1998, Halloween: H20 nearly made its budget back on its opening weekend, proving the franchise was still quite lucrative and viable. So it was no real surprise when news surfaced revealing yet another sequel was planned. Fans remained optimistic since H20 was penned-in as to exclude all previous sequels (with exception to Halloween II), receiving mixed but overall positive acclaim. Dimension Films and the Akkads continued to give fans what they wanted, and that was bringing Michael Myers back again and again, every few years. The trick was: since we clearly witnessed the death of Michael Myers four years earlier (the finale of H20 saw Laurie Strode behold the character as he was pinned between a wrecked truck and a tree), what sick loophole could writers fabricate this time to explain away his demise, leading to his new "Resurrection"?

In the opening moments of this, the eighth sequel in the Halloween series, we learn that Laurie Strode is now living at the Grace Anderson Sanitarium Psychiatric Care Facility. While there, we are re-educated by two nurses talking of past events involving their patient, Laurie. It took her brother twenty years to track her to the private school where she and her son were living a quiet, but tor-



tured, life. After several murders at the school are committed and much confusion, Strode beheaded what she believed to be her older brother... only she was wrong. It turns out that Myers (cleverly) had crushed the larynx of a paramedic, covering his head with the trademark mask, then walking off into the night. Strode, now riddled with guilt, spends her days silently waiting in her sanitarium room for her brother to come for her yet again. Three years pass as the Shape finally reappears to complete his mission, his only mission: to kill his baby sister. Dedicated fans forcefully swallowed this drivel, willing to overlook it since even Jamie Lee Curtis returned, agreeing to do her part, to make sure her character, Laurie



Strode (or herself) wouldn't appear in one more Halloween sequel.

Even director Rick Rosenthal returned, after twenty-one years, in hopes of bringing back the old flavor he felt the series was missing since he directed the first sequel in the series (Halloween II). After Myers slashes his way through the asylum security staff, making his way to his sister's room, he is locked by a very much still-functioning (and spunky) Strode. A chase leads to the roof where Myers is locked again, but not for long... hanging off the roof of the building, Laurie has to be sure the man behind the mask is her brother, and not another poor unfortunate. By attempting to remove his mask, she is grabbed, stabbed and dropped to her death, but not before giving brother a far wall kiss and telling him: "I will see you in Hell." The scene is then followed

by Myers eerily passing the torch (his bloody knife) to another potential psychotic down-masked patient who is obsessed with both serial killers and memorizing the facts surrounding them. Myers is portrayed this time by actor/stuntman Brad Loree, who does an excellent job of complementing the earlier work done by Chris Durand in the previous H20 film. Interesting side note on the new Myers mask seen in Resurrection; it was sculpted on Brad Loree's life-mask, but was sculpted by mask company Cinema Secrets using the Stan Winston-designed H20 mask for reference. This was the first and, so far, the only time an actual mask company was hired to create the infamous mask for any of the films.

The story then turns to our star heroine, Sara Moyer (Barbra Kijlich), and her group of obnoxious friends and lucky few who have been chosen to star in a reality show being filmed in the old Myers house. Sara also has an anonymous web friend named "Deckard," who proves important in her salvation during the closing moments of the film. After we are given a rare call of the potential body count (or victims) for the Shape to dispense of, we meet Freddy Hams, played by rapper Busta Rhymes, the mastermind behind "Dangertainment." Hams owns and runs his own web cast show, with the aid of his partner Nora Winston, played by the ever-annoying Tyra Banks. Everything seems to be moving forward as planned, until Myers decides to return home and appears none too happy with the current proceedings taking place in his home-stead. Viewers seem upstaged by the gory deaths of the imitating and unlikely cast, as pokes and prods at reality entertainment are taken at no expense. It seems quite ironic that the filmmakers would point out the flaws in the very form of entertainment they chose to utilize in their script for the film. At any rate,



Shown on this page: Four Lights mode kit of Michael Myers, an Equity Toys "Horror Headliners" big-head action figure of Myers (exclusive to Spencer's Gifts), Sideshow Collectibles' 12" Myers action figure, a Halloween Village release of the Myers's House with miniature Michael figurines, a complete set of H20 lobby cards, a life-size Michael Myers mannequin released in limited supply, and (clockwise) the DVD cover of the Halloween 25 Years of Terror documentary.

their message falls on deaf ears as the film was intended as more of a way to put MTV teen bums in seats than to pay tribute to the father of all slashers. As Myers finally murders his way to the final surviving duo of Freddy and Sara, this cat and mouse game changes gears. What follows can easily be regarded as the most inexcusable farce in horror film history, an utter extended middle finger toward Halloween's core base of fans and the Horror genre at large. Busta Rhymes' character (with no fear of any kind) attempts to lunge-ly fight Michael Myers repeatedly. In one scene, after a horrendous liner is dropped, he even kicks Myers out of a second-story window! In the film's finale, Rhymes finishes off Myers with an electric cable shot to the crotch sending him stumbling into a mess of wires where he is electrocuted. You should be asking at this point, how could this happen? There is a good reason, albeit a sad one... the original edit of the film was first shown to teen-filled test audiences to seek input. Sadly this led producers at Dimension Films to feel the need to strengthen the appeal of the film to a much broader teen audience who wanted to see Busta Rhymes not killed, but rather survive the film. In fact three endings were shot regarding the fate of Freddie Harris with several re-shoots and re-edits. Could this final lame duck be a result of Dimension productions being tainted by a push towards capitalizing on trendiness instead of staying faithful and respectful to the franchise? You be the judge. The film did go on to nearly recoup its budget back upon its opening weekend, but left the franchise (once again) going dormant for yet another undesignated period of time. While Myers does open his eyes in the closing moments of this film, he would never obtain his revenge on Busta Rhymes...

Twenty-five years after the first Halloween hit theaters, in the fall of 2003, a special anniversary convention was held in Pasadena, CA. Segments of the convention were filmed and released on DVD on July 25, 2006, thanks to Anchor Bay. 25 Years of Terror features interviews from many of the series' cast members as well as filmmakers of the Halloween movies, along with a healthy amount of footage from the series. The convention panel discussions and interviews were also compiled with the DVD premiere of *Horror's Hallowed Grounds* (a live-action version of the articles found in each issue of *HorrorHound*). Aside

from adding tons of new information, interviews, fan submissions, and a tour of the filming locations of the original film, the DVD also showcased a contest held at the show, which was to win a walk on role in the next Halloween film (at the time, *Halloween 9* was planned, but not yet in production) A Heather Bowen won this opportunity, and

Shown on this page: *Halloween: Resurrection* German movie program, a *This promotional flyer for Resurrection with cut-out Myers mask pinned on the back (front and back shown)*, and an assortment of NECA collectibles (including the 18" action figure, bobble head, minidoll, and MyersLooms figure box set



The original 2002 US one-sheet for *Halloween: Resurrection*



angered by the direction their masked-maniac had taken, and looked forward to his eventual return to the big screen - they just never expected him to come back "re-imagined." Malik Akkad, who now handled the Myers franchise, was smart enough to attach a respected name as the film's director from day one, Rob Zombie. Upstart turned into intrigue as horror fans were surely interested in finding out what the director of *The Devil's Rejects* could do with this classic Carpenter storyline. Unfortunately, intrigue turned into confusion and anger as story elements began to leak from a floating script. The movie was to focus more on the youth of Myers, his family, and why he became a "monster," giving back story and reason behind the madman - something nobody wanted to see. The term "re-imagining" was used insistently, instead of "remake," assuring fans it was not tarnishing the Myers name - just giving a

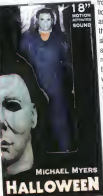
four years later, she reportedly (finally) was shot in scenes for Rob Zombie's *Halloween*, but was eventually out from the film.

Tragically, long-time Halloween producer, Moustapha Akkad, and his 34-year-old daughter, Roma Akkad Morla, were killed in 2005 due to injuries sustained in terrorist bombings while attending a wedding in Amman, Jordan.

## Rob Zombie's Halloween

New attempts to relaunch the career of Michael Myers have been considered, whether it be new sequels or crossover attempts with other horror icons (spawning from the success of Freddy vs. Jason, a Pinhead (Halloween) crossover was in the planning stages with Carpenter directing a *Clive Barker* story). None of these ideas went into production, however, Myers returned to scare audiences in one of his biggest films to date, thanks to a "re-imagining" by rocker-turned-director Rob Zombie.

The original Texas Chainsaw Massacre was relaunched successfully by New Line Cinema in 2003, and this seemed to be the trend Hollywood was swinging towards. Virtually every horror film released in the past fifty years has been pegged for a remake (including *Halloween*, starring the once-hopeful foe to Myers), so it should have been no surprise to fans when Myers' name was announced. By the end of *Resurrection*, fans were angered by the direction their masked-maniac had taken, and looked forward to his eventual return to the big screen - they just never expected him to come back "re-imagined." Malik Akkad, who now handled the Myers franchise, was smart enough to attach a respected name as the film's director from day one, Rob Zombie. Upstart turned into intrigue as horror fans were surely interested in finding out what the director of *The Devil's Rejects* could do with this classic Carpenter storyline. Unfortunately, intrigue turned into confusion and anger as story elements began to leak from a floating script. The movie was to focus more on the youth of Myers, his family, and why he became a "monster," giving back story and reason behind the madman - something nobody wanted to see. The term "re-imagining" was used insistently, instead of "remake," assuring fans it was not tarnishing the Myers name - just giving a



# HALLOWEEN



what-if type scenario. Nobody seemed interested in finding out what made Myers a monster - he was the Boogeyman after all. The Shape. No explanation was needed, nor seemingly wanted. When early drafts of the script began to leak, the pot was nearly boiling. Excessive bad-language, rape, a strip bar, mutilating animals, and masturbation were all elements of the script that hurt initial reaction to Rob's directorial vision.

As if the film didn't already have a shaky time getting fans of the series to trust the rock-director, Rob Zombie's casting announcements started to cause almost as much stress. Bill Moseley, Sid Haig, and Sheri Moon (Zombie's wife) were joked about constantly that they would be given roles in

negging "injury" many films of today reel from: leaked copies on the internet. The leaked copy, or "workprint," featured a fistful of shots that nearly changed the tone and story of the film altogether - cut scenes not included in the theatrical version of the story (including an alternate ending). Depending on who you talk to - many fans heralded the leaked-cut of the film, while others dismissed it as "junk." No matter which version of the film you saw, most horror fans hated the idea that Myers no longer mysteriously "snapped," killing his loving family and becoming a spook, as it were. Zombie's new film created a "serial killer," devoid of mystery or intrigue. The movie was released theatrically on August 31st, 2007, and earned an impressive \$30.6 million on its opening weekend, as most movie-going public were very interested in seeing what shocks laid in store. By the end of its US theatrical run, Halloween pulled in over \$58.2 million, making it the most successful film in the franchise.

An interesting note about the multiple versions of the film that existed upon the

Rob's third feature. They were... as were horror veterans William Forsythe, Danny Trejo, Ken Foree, Dee Wallace, and Tom Towles (many of which also worked with Rob in past features). Malcolm McDowell (cost as the new Dr. Loomis) was a breath of fresh air for this crew, as was Danielle Harris (of Halloween 4-5 fame), who was cleverly cast as Anne Brackett. For Myers himself, a newcomer was brought in by the name of Daeg Faerch. Daeg portrayed the younger-tormented Michael throughout the first half of the film, while Tyler Mane (Devil's Rejects, X-Men) portrayed the monster that terrorizes the screen throughout the latter half of the feature.

The story itself played off the original film, however, giving much more background on Myers' childhood. A broken family riddled with verbal abuse, a stripper-mom and her abusive boyfriend, plus a slutty sister - there is no mystery why Michael soon murdered the ones he "loved." Just like in the original, Myers is sent to an asylum, where he breaks out many years later to murder his last blood-relative, Laurie. Having been raised by an adoptive family, Laurie (played by young actress, Scout Taylor-Compton) has a babysitting gig the night of Halloween, when her big brother finally comes looking for her. Dr. Loomis (McDowell) coincidentally had just exited the Myers-case, upon Michael's break-out of prison. What follows is a similar-fashioned story to the original Halloween, as Loomis sees desperately to help stop Myers before he can kill his younger sister. Myers, as mentioned, was played by former wrestler

Tyler Mane (with stunt work in the film handled by Joe Davis and Casey Hendershot). Standing at an impressive 6' 8" tall, Tyler was easily the tallest (and largest) man to don the Myers mask. The mask itself was designed by Wayne Toth (Devil's Rejects), and happens to be the most menacing mask in the series and the best looking since the Carpenter original. In the film, young Michael (Faerch) dons the mask while he murders his sister Judith (Hanna Hall). He hides the mask before going to a mental institute, and recovers it before wreaking havoc on Haddonfield once again, fifteen years later. The dated-mask featured tears and deterioration which are unrealistic with an aged-Halloween mask, but the look worked nonetheless.

Before the film was released, it suffered from a



A catalog page from last year's a Don Post Studios Halloween presentation, featuring multiple well-known lights and a Myers head on a table. Most of these products are currently available.

Zombie's Halloween Myers masks were to be available via both NECA and Wayne Toth's costume store, Halloween Town. It was only recently revealed that Don Post Studios plans a new mass-market version of this mask available beginning this fall!

Despite Rob Zombie's relaunch of the series, comic book company Devil's Due Publishing have been hard at work continuing the story that John Carpenter set in motion, releasing new comic tales revolving around the characters of Myers, Loomis, and Strode. Halloween: Nightshade was a four-issue comic arc released in 2008, written by Stef Hutchinson, and tells the story of several people who get drawn into the Shape's web in the town of Russellville, which neighbors Haddonfield from the film.

Shown on this page: The Cult Classics Evolution of Evil Michael Myers two-pack featuring young and adult Myers, Hall of Fame figure, featuring removable sheet, and a sampling of Don Post/Paper Magic Group Halloween goods.





series. "We're continuing from the film series' continuity [which includes *Halloween* and *H20*], simply because that's what the owners chose to do with the comics, and also because I think that arc is closer to the original film, with the exception of *Resurrection*," Stef told us recently of the series. "The story fits in between Parts 7 and 8 in the intervening two years. This story came first because it's essentially a re-introduction of the Shape. In the remake, he was simply a man, and in some of the sequels he was basically just 'Jason' with family problems, and we're really trying to get back to the roots of the series to remind people that the Shape is an evil, terrifying, and intelligent presence. Our Shape will never get beaten down by Busta Rhymes or star in reality television. He's twisted and extremely dangerous. Malek Akkad is very closely involved in the evolution of the series." As for the future of comic-Myers, "We're looking to expand to possible Loomis solo stories set in the years before *Halloween*, and possibly even stories



The original 2007 US one-sheet for Rob Zombie's *Halloween*.

involving the alternative continuity of the middle trilogy, although I won't be that involved in those," Stef adds. "My only other wish is to write a Silver Shamrock story." A thirtieth anniversary book is planned for release later this year. It will be a double-sized collection of short stories that all spin directly from characters or situations in the first film.

While the *Halloween* film series has once again stalled, with Rob Zombie publicly stating he has no interest in returning to the series, while many of the actors that make up his exploits already signed-on to a sequel (pending the decision to make one), fans of the series have proven time and again that they are most loyal and forgiving, possibly more so than any other fans in the industry. Myers has been the focal-point of dozens (and dozens) of amateur mask makers and collectors around the world, as our *Fantasm Collector's* Spotlight article every issue has proven, and the Shape's merchandise has been a constant seller and an eager addition to any toy line, as these pages have shown. Whether or not Rob Zombie does decide to return to Haddonfield, there is no doubt that the exploits of Michael Myers haven't ended. He will rise again, knife in hand, ready to tackle whatever the next filmmaker plans on throwing his way because if nine films have yet to prove: Evil never dies. 🍷



Shown on this page: NECA's *Halloween* remake toys, including an 11" and 7" figure release, a Spencer's exclusive original Myers clown doll and (below) a complete set of Devil's Due Publishing comic books. *Halloween* lightboxes, including replicas, replicas, and replica covers (four-issue mini-series).



*Halloween* written by Kenneth Nelson; *Halloween II*, *H20* and Rob Zombie's *Halloween* written by Nathan Hanau, *Halloween 4* and *5* written by Eric Newell; *Halloween: Resurrection* written by Aaron Crowell. Thanks to Sean Clark, Tommy Pickering, Donnie Don, Stef Hutcherson, Larry New, Brian Warrmoth, Nicole Falk, and everyone who helped make this article possible.

# THE 20 MOST UNDERRATED SLASHERS OF THE 1980S

After Halloween was released to theaters, the slasher boom in the 1980s began, thanks to the birth and growth of the home video market. Jason Voorhees, Freddy Krueger, and Michael Myers became icons in the industry, eventually spawning a multitude of sequels and enough merchandise to choke a horse. But what about those films that never received their regularization or merchandising? Many of those films featured iconic killers who are loved by droves of fans and have earned themselves cult status. Sadly, that status is the height of their achievement, and many have lingered in a state of purgatory so long that the masses (and new horror fans) have forgotten they even exist. A few of these films will be remembered, thanks to

sloppy Hollywood remakes, which act more as "re-imaginings." So here, we present our list of the 20 Most Underrated Slashers of the 1980s! While these films often follow the standard slasher conventions still seen in cinema today, some stray (only mildly) at times in clever and exciting ways. These are the films you may have heard about, but never got around to seeing. They were "body count" films, that strived to show its audience exciting, new, and inventive (at-times gory) ways to kill annoying teenagers. Many of which were "popcorn" flicks that played as morality tales to a coming-of-age audience, who are now adults, writing articles, such as these to help younger audiences find these titles in a crowded and convoluted marketplace.



## 1 FUNHOUSE

The Funhouse (1981)

Who will dare to face the challenge of *The Funhouse*? Who is mad enough to enter that world of darkness? How about you, sir...? From the director who brought us *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* comes an original slasher of a very different flavor. Opening with a point-of-view tour of a horror fan's room adorned with Universal Monster horror posters, masks, and action figures (much like many of our movie today), you just know that the film is a labor of love for director Toby Hooper. The early scenes even play out as a homage to the opening moments of *Halloween* where young Michael Myers places a mask over his face (and the camera) and proceeds to stab his nude sister to "death" in her shower, but this time with the sister taking on the role of Janet Leigh in the scene as *Psycho*. However, the joke is on the viewer when it is revealed that the masked killer is simply our lead heroine's punk brother playing a sick and twisted prank with a rubber knife.

Amy Harper (Elizabeth Berridge) threatens her younger brother with terrible revenge before running off on her date with love interest and general guy Buzz Klammer (Casper Van Dien). Later joined by Richie Atterbury (Miss Chapin) and his girl Liz Duncan (Largo Woodruff), the group sets off on a night of pot smoking fun at a carnival. Soon enough, Richie gets the bright idea to have the group slip into the funhouse at closing and spend the night. Things quickly go sour for our group as they secretly witness the odd funhouse attendant (wearing a latex Frankenstein mask and hands) murder the carnival psychic after a sexual exchange gone wrong. Conrad Starn (Kevin Connolly), the funhouse owner, returns and discovers not only the fortune teller's body, but now the night's take has been stolen as well. This sends his freakish steps into a fit of rage and confusion, breaking himself about the face and head before finally tearing away his mask for the greatest reveal since *The Phantom of the Opera* with the horribly deformed, deft-palated freak with razor sharp claws hands sniffling a horrible shriek. In fact, the film is filled with many nods to

Universal Studio's famous monster movie moments. The terrified teens soon find they are trapped in the funhouse, only now to be hunted, one by one, by the "Funhouse Freak" and his stepfather Hooper did an amazing job of bringing the funhouse itself to life in the picture, as if it was acting as a separate antagonist mocking the teens, complete with eerie sounds and lighting that would make Mario Bava himself proud. Wayne Doba, who plays the "Freak," should be commended for his professional approach to this masked role, giving the Freak character emotional depth that evokes both pity and fear. An awesome looking monster, cast of arrogant teens (who get their comeuppance), and creepy carnival setting... how can you go wrong? Rob Zombie took notice for one, as his freshman film effort, *House of 1,000 Corpses*, is highly reminiscent of both *The Funhouse* and *Chainsaw Massacre*. *The Funhouse* may not have had a trademark masked murderer with a knife, but it did beat Jason Voorhees to the big screen (if only by two months) in bringing the first monogonoid masked slasher to the sub-genre. The film stands head and shoulders above its brethren, and truly is a fine example of a good stalk and slash picture with a modest body count giving way to a better story that never received the sequel it deserved. Key Deaths: Forced hanging, anti-to-head, clawed-to-death, strolling, impalement on sword, and crushed to death in giant metal gears (Note: deaths listed throughout this article are not presented in chronological order).

## 2 THE PROWLER

The Prowler (1981)

A World War II soldier is kept alive overseas by the hope of receiving "Dear John" letters from his beloved Rosemary, until one fateful date when Rosemary decided she had waited long enough for her beau to return and fell into the arms of another. Upon his return with vengeance in his cup, "The Prowler" makes his statement to his love at the graduation dance, making Rosemary and her new lover stick together, permanently. From that day on Major Chatham, Rosemary's father, banned graduation dances.

They five years later, the teens of the small town, led by Pam (Vicky Dawson), decide to resume the graduation dance once held. Ignoring events from the past, they forge ahead with the intent of a successful return to normalcy. Unbeknown to them while revving the dance, they woke the Prowler from dormancy. Carnage ensues during preparation and continues until the explosive finale.

Expertly shot and directed by Joe Zito, with some of Tom Savini's best special effect efforts, the film was released overseas as *Rosemary's Killer*. *The Prowler*, as it was domestically called, came in like a storm and fell right back into obscurity. With some of the most savage kills in the slasher film genre, *The Prowler* stands alone amongst films like *Maniac* for its unrelenting violence and brutality. A must for slasher fans of any generation. Key Deaths: Pitchfork slash kabob, bayonet through the head, pitchfork shower off, rear decapitation, a misdirection stabbing, shotgun blast to the chest, and a total cerebral decimation by shotgun.

## 3 THE BURNING

The Burning (1981)

Exterior, night time... a group of teenagers have gathered outside the bunk of their mean spirited camp maintenance-man, Cropsy, with revenge on their minds. One of the campers then sneaks into the sleeping man's quarters, removes a rotting skull from a box and lights a candle inside of it. He then sneaks back outside, where the kids begin banging on the window to wake up Cropsy, hoping for a good scare. Startled by the horrifying visage on his right stand, Cropsy accidentally knocks the candle onto his bed, resulting in a raging inferno. What started out as a little prank has left the maintenance-man with third degree burns all over his body. After spending five years recovering in a hospital, he disappears, returning to his old sleeping grounds. Unfortunately, no one was ready for what would happen next, as Cropsy returns to where his accident occurred years earlier, and begins to exact his own brand of bloody vengeance on unsuspecting campers of the nearby Camp Stonewater.

The *Burning* certainly has the pedigree to be a cult classic, with special FX by Tom Savini, superb directing by Tony Maylam, and even a few appearances from future film/TV stars Jason Alexander, Fehner Stevens, and Holly Hunter. Few people are aware that it was also the Weinstein's first production, thus launching the brothers' careers. It's lightly directed, highly suspenseful piece of slasher fare that had one thing working against it upon its release: Hitting theaters in 1981, some feel it was released too close to Friday the 13th - a similar summer camp slasher - and was therefore ignored by audiences. The film also subverts traditional slasher gender roles by having a "final boy," some critics claim this contributed to its failure. After vanishing from theaters rather quickly, it was relegated to obscurity. For years in the late '90s, it was only available in the United States on badly transferred VHS copies. As the internet horror community grew, however, so did the film's popularity with those savvy enough to have tracked down a copy. And when it was finally released on DVD the past summer, it became one of the last slasher classics no longer in need of a DVD release. Although its cult status is quickly growing, it will always be an undervalued classic if for no other reason than the numerous years it has sat in the shelves waiting for its day to shine. *Key Deaths:* Tons of gender shenanigans, slonks and chappings (see niff nappies), axe-to-face, and bawings.

## 4 MY BLOODY VALENTINE (1981)

Twenty years ago, a crew of miners in the small town of Valentine Bluffs were stuck working late on Valentine's Day. As the town's big holiday dance was kicking off, a pair of mining supervisors decided to ditch their crew and join the festivities at the town hall early. Disaster soon followed as a methane explosion left all but one of the stranded miners to die, the only survivor: Harry Warden. Despondent to say the least, Harry returned the following year to seek revenge, murdering both of the supervisors and leaving an ominous warning to the townsfolk never to hold another Valentine's Day dance again. Such is the backstory for the classic 1981 slasher, *My Bloody Valentine*. As Valentine Bluffs prepares for its first Valentine's dance in twenty years, none of the townsfolk are prepared for the body count that begins to pile up. As bloody origins are found in heart-shedding candy canes accompanied by poems warning the town to cancel the party, the town's mayor and sheriff decide to cooperate with the demands and put a halt to the madness before it escalates. Unfortunately, a group of twenty-something miners and their girlfriends aren't buying into the legend of Harry Warden and secretly decide to hold their own dance at the coal mine. Has Harry Warden really returned home to make good on the threat he made twenty years earlier? Dressed as a miner, the film's slasher begins to "pickaxe" his way through the party in menacing fashion. *My Bloody Valentine* stands out not for bringing something new to the genre, but rather for following all of the conventions so commonly associated with the slasher film. An iconic killer, creative murders, conveniently secluded areas for sexual activity, partying youngsters, a stereo-

typical prankster, the crazy, old "prophet of doom" spilling out warnings about the town legend - you name it and *My Bloody Valentine* has it! *Key Deaths:* Heart impalement, pickaxe to the chest, jumble-dred core, hot dog face boiling, showerhead impalement, couple drilled through the midsection while copulating, nail gun to the head, and a hanging.

## 5 STAGE FRIGHT (1987)

"He killed people and chopped them up into little pieces," living Wallace was a stage performer who went insane, killing sixteen people before being locked-up in an asylum. On one dark and stormy night, Irving escapes captivity and stows away in the back of a visiting car (er, station wagon), where he catches a ride to the location of his next killing spree and the setting of this foreign horror slasher! *Delira* (or *Stage Fright* as it's known in the US) was released in 1987 and was directed by the brilliant Italian director/dancer Michele Soavi (Dellamorte Dell'amore, AKA, Cemetery Man) and starred David Brandon, Barbara Cupisti, and John Morgan. The befuddled-looking visiting duo of (wouldn't you know it) stage performers, who unwittingly give passage to the escaped inmate, are in the midst of an all-night stage rehearsal for a new wave dance performance. After being locked in the dance hall, the troupe of twenty-somethings are killed off one by one, unable to escape. The interesting thing about our killer, Irving, is that he has decided to don the mask of one of the stage performers - that of a giant white owl. The artwork of this giant, and sometimes confusing, owl-mask has been the most widely used art to sell the film, which may have explained why audiences didn't become attracted to the movie upon its release, while inventive and (admittedly) iconic - the mask could also be construed by some as ugly and awkward. The film itself is a very tight example of a slasher flick with a straight point A-to-B scenario for the killer and his victims without any shaky or unrelated character story arcs to help complicate the plot or distract from it. The finale of the story is truly the only flaw to the film - mostly based on a later-highlighted rule pointed out in the '90s slasher horror *Screen*. The killer always comes back for one last scare... A great example of an '80s slasher *Key Deaths:* Pickaxe to the face, drill to the stomach, axe to the chest, severed torso, decapitation (zow), exsiccation, gunshot-to-the-head, and strangulation.

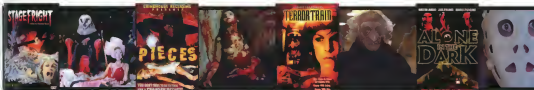
## 6 PIECES (1982)

The ultimate cult slasher pic to resurface and further exploit the use of a chainsaw as a tool for devious delight... only this time no clever camera work or implied cut aways, all the bloody carnage is on full gritty display (even if some of it is pretty cheesy). *Pieces* wastes no time getting the severed head rolling with a vicious axe murder and dismemberment scene just two minutes in. The film was

directed by Juan Piquer (*Slugs*) and co-written by the legendary shock and sleaze maestro Joe D'Amato (*The Gimm Reaper*) and Dick Randall (*The Mad Butcher*). The movie is a camp, flawed low budget gorilla that simply fits the trashy '80s slasher template perfectly. It is for these reasons, the film is both loved and hated. Common slasher-like elements are at play here, such as the abundance of naked female flesh and suspicious characters including the creepy gardener Paul Smith (Sam Raimi's *Crimewave*), Professor Brown played by Jack Taylor (*Ghost Ships of the Blind Dead*), and the Dean portrayed by Edmund Purdon (*Abused*). It also stars Christopher George (*City Of The Living Dead*) as the lead detective and wife Linda Day George (*Day of the Animals*). Shot both in Boston and Spain, the film became a grind house hit pulling in \$604,510 in the US alone on its opening weekend back on September 23rd, 1983. The story involves a detective who is sent to investigate the bloody chainsaw slayings occurring on a college campus. Seems the killer is dismembering the girls, and then doing something mysterious with the pieces. We also are made aware of his obsession with a nude jigsaw puzzle seen in the opening moments of the film. If that is any clue, it is also a fact that the killer's look was not inspired by the Italian Giallo killer dress code, but rather by *The Shadow*, one of the most famous pulp heroes of the 20th century. In any case just remember: You don't have to go to Texas for a chainsaw massacre! *Key Deaths:* Repeated axe blows to the head, wood saw dismemberment, several chainsaw dismemberments and decapitations, victim wets herself before being cut in half with chainsaw, gunshot-to-head, and a bloody grain gripping

## 7 TERROR TRAIN (1980)

Scream Queen Jamie Lee Curtis headlines the often overlooked 1980 slasher flick *Terror Train*. After a fraternity prank goes horribly awry at a New Year's Eve party, freshman Kerry Hanson ends up in a mental institution due to the emotional distress from this cruel prank. Three years later, the same crew of frat brothers and sorority sisters decide to hold a costume party to celebrate their last New Year's Eve before they graduate college... and what better place to hold such a party than on a train? Of course, a killer is loose on the locomotive and is making his rounds to eradicate everyone involved in the evil lack played on poor Kerry just a few years prior. The killer manages to evade detection by changing into his victim's costumes, the most famous of which is a Groucho Marx outfit. In the meantime, the college co-eds are partying down and enjoying a magic performance, with the magician played by David Copperfield. The remorseful Alana (Jamie Lee Curtis) soon realizes that Kerry Hanson has come back for revenge, only she thinks the magician is Kerry... or is it? We do not find out, conveniently enough, until the final showdown, where the killer is finally unmasked. *Terror Train* isn't the bloodiest slasher film nor does it have the highest body count, but its claustrophobic setting, impressively violent killer, and top-notch performance by Jamie Lee Curtis help







it stand out from the rest of the pack. *Key Deaths*: Sword through stomach, slit throat, mirror smash n' slash, decapitation, sword through chest, and train-mauling.

## 8 ALONE in the dark

*Alone in the Dark* (1982)

The first review I heard for *Alone in the Dark* came from my father when I was about ten years old. His review, if memory serves, was simple but effective: "It was a good horror film about escaped mental patients and had this great scene in which a fat, crazy guy picks up a guard over his head and breaks his spine over his knee like a doll!" Sadly he didn't know the name of the film, having only caught it on late night television. It took a few trips to the video rental store to figure out the name, but once I did, I was glad I had put forth the effort. What Pop had failed to mention was the amazing star-studded cast. Donald Pleasence, who one year prior had finally stopped (or so he thought) the Haddonfield Slasher, now returned to the screen as (yet another doctor to the mentally disturbed) Dr. Leo Bain, caretaker of an asylum, or as he likes to call it his "haven" for the mentally ill. The cast of crazes or "voyagers" as Dr. Bain refers to them, includes Jack Palance (Colonel Frank Hawkes), who was very popular at that time not so much for his past roles in westerns or appearing as Dracula in 1973, but for popping up each and every week to ask that one important question on *Ripley's Believe It...*, or not? Television veteran Martin Landau (Byron "Preacher" Sublim) who later played Bela Lugosi in the film *Ed Wood*, Erand van Lath (Ronald "Freaky" Easter) whose most memorable roles include *Grossbartner* in *Str. Crazy and Dynamic in the Running Man*. Then last, but not least, there was "the Bleeder," whose nose gushes the red stuff every time he kills, since his identity is kept a mystery till the end, let's not run the surprise.

The story revolves around the new doctor, Dan Potter (Dwight Schultz), who is to take up the care of the four insane psychics (I mean voyagers) at the haven. As quick as they meet their new sophisticated, Frank concludes that Dr. Potter has killed their former doctor, named Harry Merton, and worse, wants now to kill all of them! It is not difficult to convince the other three men of this as they wait for the right time to make their escape and dispatch of the good doctor on the outside. Since Dr. Bain is not a fan of bars, the men's room is kept secure with electric sensors that give the illusion of freedom, but houses hidden doors that slam shut if an escape attempt is made. The next night, the power goes out in the small town (call it an act of God or sabotage) with no good explanation given. Suffice to say the crazies walk right out the front door, but not without jump starting their killing spree first. The power outage leads to full-scale looting of stores as the men have no problem acquiring everything from new clothes to weapons, such as knives and a crossbow. The Bleeder even grabs a hockey mask off the wall in an effort to keep his identity hidden. Soon enough he viciously slashes a looter in the crowd with a gardening claw, coincidentally the same year Jason Voorhees drenched his iconic hook and put your yard



tools to good use. The very next night the malicious group surround the Potter family home as they begin their slow assault. Can Dan Potter keep his family safe from the voyagers? Who is the Bleeder? and who is truly insane? Those left on the inside or us on the outside? *Key Deaths*: Elevated spiral smash over knee, garden tool slashing, suspended strangulation, knife-to-gut, nailed to tree with armwrest through window, and meat cleaver-to-spine.

## 9 DON'T GO IN THE HOUSE

*Don't Go in the House* (1980)

The spring of 1980 introduced a film that became a cult hit with horror fans far and wide. Joseph Elessi's slasher *Don't Go in the House*, originally titled *The Burning*, endured a name change by a US distributor upon its US theatrical release. Hot on the heels of other early 80s splendiferous slasher greats, such as *Maniac* and *Happy Birthday to Me* released the same year, the film did quite well playing at the notorious 42nd Street Theater in New York City, even reaching *Variety's* top three, one week playing alongside *Friday the 13th*. Considering the film is labeled a slasher, it is totally bloodless and remains scary and disturbing, one hell of a great accomplishment for any horror film even by today's excessive standards.

The story deals with Donny Kohler, played by Don Grimaldi (who you may know as Paty Pansie from the HBO series *The Sopranos*), a seemingly normal guy who just so happened to have been mistreated as a child. It seems that his overbearing mother was quite fond of burning the boy's flesh as a form of punishment. Donny later develops a need to build a steel room in his now deceased mother's mansion with the addition of a full flame retardant suit and flame thrower. Only now he needs a cut of fresh female victims to strip nude, cover in gasoline, and roast alive. Don't be confused into thinking this is a laugh ride or your fun loving campy slasher flick. *Don't Go in the House* is a very serious look a truly sick mind. The film is no doubt inspired by the real life killer Ed Gein and Hitchcock's *Psycho*, but has more of a deep rooted sense of dread that truly leaves its audience disturbed and depressed after viewing. If it were not for the body count and low budget nature of the film, it would not find itself among this list of slasher titles, but more at home among other exploitation fare such as *Last House on the Left* or *I Spat On Your Grave*. Don't Overlook

This Film! *Key Deaths*: Burnings, dense thrower (one nude) and "flaming Father."

## 10 APRIL FOOL'S DAY

*April Fool's Day* (1988)

It would be hard to discuss this film without revealing the ending. If you have yet to see this movie - rent it, then read on! Released at the peak of the slasher movie boom, *April Fool's Day* delivered the goods we have come to expect from any film from this subgenre. A holiday-themed name, a whodunit murder mystery taking place near a wooded area, clever "jokes," and lots of annoying teenage victims. The story tells of a Murly St. John (Deborah Forester) who has invited a group of college friends to celebrate spring break at her island-nation. As the group is introduced to us, they make themselves at



home, revealing their uninteresting character backbones and eventually disappearing, one-by-one. As dead bodies "turn up," the friends are thrown into survival mode, as they try to make it through the weekend. Passage to the mainland is out and help won't arrive until the upcoming week begins anew. As the surviving friends attempt to figure out who is responsible for the murders, it is learned that their host, Murly, has an insane twin sister, Buffy, who has recently escaped captivity. Could Buffy be responsible for these crimes?

Devised by Fred Wolfson (1979's *When a Stranger Calls*) from the screenplay by Dennis Bach (*Beverly Hills Cop* series), *April Fool's Day* works on varying levels, from the set-up (classic slasher) to execution. The film is known for its comedic elements, a combination that works well in horror. The cast is littered with interesting names, including the previously-mentioned Forester (*Maniac*), Amy Steel (*Friday the 13th Part 2*), Ken Olandt (*Summer School*, *Lapdancer*), and Thomas F. Wilson (*Back to the Future's* *Bill Tarmen*). "Fool's Day" unfortunately also carries the baggage of being dubbed "The Movie that Killed the Slasher Genre." While the plot of the film, the "jokes," and the mystery are well done and entertaining, the finale of the film reveals that the story is actually one big April Fool's Day joke (get it?). This disorienting almost everything seen throughout the film, and rightfully, creating a bit of frustration for fans who, up until the finale, had enjoyed the movie. Luckily, fine heels all wounds and most horror fans have forgiven the twist ending, allowing the film to be remembered for its true nature: a fun, well-made, and clever slash-and-ride! *Key Deaths*: Knife-to-stomach, boat-crush, severed heads, hanging, and a missing penis.

## 11 MADMAN

*Madman* (1982)

"If you say his name above a whisper in the woods, he'll hear you... and he'll come for you!" One night, according to the film's opening campfire tale, a mean farmer named Marc went crazy and butchered his whole family with an axe. He then went to the local pub, and once the townsfolk found out the horrible deeds he had done, they promptly strung him up at the edge of town by his neck. The next morning the noise seemed empty... and the legend of "Madman Marc" was born. Released back in late 1981, in the early days of the slasher boom, *Madman* told the tale of a group of counselors and kids on the last day of summer camp. *Madman* was a decidedly straightforward "stalk and slash" tale, as one by one, the counselors are picked off in unique and gruesome ways, many inventive and very brutal. *Madman* starred Paul Ehlers, Alexis Dubois (*Dawn of the Dead's* Gaylen Ross, under an alias), Tony Futh, and Carl Fredericks, and was directed by the late Joe Gemore. While it didn't break new ground, *Madman* featured a genuine creepiness and dark mood that other slashers never achieved. *Madman*, like many slashers of the era, was shot on a modest budget, but had a very polished look and great production value. There was an overwhelming sense of dread throughout the film that was heightened by being



completely shot at night. Marty was a truly memorable killer with long clawed nails and wild hair blowing in the moonlight, and an zoo and nose always handy. Keep your eyes peeled for the famous hot tub, refrigerator, and head-under-the-hood scenes! *Madman* was a modest drive-in success, but went on to find cult status on home video. *Key Deaths*: An entire final act full of sex, throat slit, nose hanging, arm beheading, truck hood decapitation, body bent in half, axe-to-chest, and impalement on hook.

## 12 INTRUDER

Intruder (1988)

Possibly one of the most overlooked slashers of the video decade that really delivers the gory goods? And should you expect anything less from the crew that brought us the *Evil Dead* series? *Intruder* was written and directed by Scott Spiegel (writer of *Evil Dead 2*), who later acted as executive producer on both *El Roto's* *Hostel* films as well as producer on 2007 *Maniacs*. The film's cast of *Evil Dead* slummers continues, including Sam Rami (director), brother Ted Rami (actor), horror icon Bruce Campbell (star of the *Evil Dead* series), and last but not least, Dan Hicks, who had *probiotics* in both *Evil Dead 2* as country boy Randy, and in *The Intruder* as half-store owner, Bill Roberts.

It is closing time at the Walnut Lake Market grocery store, and the young crew is hard at work restocking and prong. Dr. heroine cashier, Jennifer Ross (Elizabeth Cox), receives a surprise visit from her ex-boyfriend, Craig Peterson (David Byrnes), just released from prison, who demands an explanation for the couple's break up. Things turn violent as Craig attacks Jennifer, leading to an all out brawl between the parolee and the employees and owners. Craig puts up a good fight and the night crew are unable to grab the troublemaker before he disappears into the store. The group decide to fan out and hunt him down, leading to his removal from the premises. The clerks then receive bad news from the two owners who reveal that they have agreed to sell the store off. Disillusioned, the crew returns to their tasks at hand, unsure of their futures. It is about at the point that the store clerks who so delicately sliced prison moments earlier start becoming slashed themselves, often into several pieces. *The Intruder* features a clever whodunit plot mixed with a sizable body count and one scene you're sure to not forget. This was also the very first horror film to use the now prolific KNB Effects team. Be sure to check out this gory little piece of slasher history. *Key Deaths*: Paper spike through eye, knife to chest, hydraulic press facial cross section, meat hook hanging from jaw and jawline skull cross section.

## 13 SLAUGHTER HIGH

Slaughter High (1986)

A gang of high school students (who resemble the cast of *Friday* Something) have decided to torture a young geek by the name of Marty Ramstein. Thinking he is about to "score" with the school hottie, he is actually tricked into stripping nude, then video taped as he is prodded and

electrocuted by the punks, hung upside down, and given a "swifty"... the joke doesn't end there, as Marty is later sub-zapped by the crew while working on a project in the school lab. The prank goes awry and Marty is disfigured in an acid-splash and fire... on his birthday at that (April Fool's Day). Ten years later, the gang has moved on with their lives, but are invited to their tenth year school anniversary. Gathered at their old school, which is now closed, the gang decides to party in a true reckless abandon, as Marty enacts revenge on the meat and women who destroyed his life. The movie isn't the most action-packed on this list, but it's a true slasher, hitting almost every mark, from the "homic" masked killer (this time in a old-man Jester mask) to the clever kills, nudity, and the wronged victim seeking revenge years later. It even features some of the dumbest victims this side of the Atlantic - idiots who, after witnessing the death of their friends, make poor decisions like to take a bath... or have sex. I guess nothing phases complete jerks... The film was directed by George Duggdale and Mark Ezra (neither of which have produced anything of importance since), and starred Caroline Munro (*The Abominable Dr. Phibes*, playing a high schooler, who happened to be 36 at the time of the film's release) and Simon Scuddamore (Marty, who tragically committed suicide soon after the film's completion). Harry Manfredini does the soundtrack, which at times he sneaks in clever homages to other slasher hits, including a quick nod to *Friday* the 13th. The movie also features one of the most confusing endings of all, so just be warned before breaking this gem down! *Key Deaths*: Hung on hook/buried, acid bath, electrocution, acid ingestion, impalement, decimated by lawn mower, sewage drowning, axe-to-face, and needle-to-eye.

## 14 CRAWLSPACE

Crawlspace (1986)

Klaus Kinski plays Dr. Karl Ganthier, who runs a small apartment building and tends to only rent to young, attractive women. This might be due to the fact that Ganthier likes to creep around in the building's crawlspaces and spy on his tenants. The film has so much more going for it than your standard pervy-eyed spying landlord flick. It seems that Dr. Ganthier likes to take human life, he's become addicted to killing, but he also sees it as sort of an experiment, being that his father was a Nazi surgeon, it just makes natural.

Despite the unique storyline, it is really Kinski that makes this movie memorable. He plays his character with such subtlety, with his quiet voice and nonchalant way of pointing simple things out to his soon-to-be victims. The script also gives Kinski the chance to show the inner torment his character is going through. After each killing, he plays Russian Roulette in an attempt to put a stop to his reign of terror. But when the empty chamber clicks, he says softly, "So be it." And the killing continues.

Most of all the killing is done off-camera, except for a couple of the doctor's homemade body-traps, including a chair that will surely make you squirm a bit. But even though we don't get to see the murders, we do get to see the results of most of them since the good doctor likes to

put them on display. Like the woman locked in a cage who can't talk because he cut out her tongue, and keeps it in a jar on the table. Do yourself a favor and seek out this film, sit back, and be amazed at the sheer talent that is Klaus Kinski. *Key Deaths*: Projected spear-to-back, projected spearing-anal probe, and several nasty bloody bodies.

## 15 HELL NIGHT

Hell Night (1981)

In 1981 producer Irwin Yablans, along with Bruce Cohn Curtis, struck a deal with Compass International to whip up an unusual entity as the American slasher sweepstakes. Directed by Tom DeSimone, with young stars like Linda Blair, Vince Van Patton, and Peter Barton playing key roles, the stage was set for an entertaining romp that takes place one "Hell Night".

Marty (Blair) is a new pledge for the Sorority Alpha Sigma Ro. Together with some fraternity boys (Baron and Van Patton), they must endure one night at the dreaded Garth Manor in order to earn their college badge of honor. Equipped with only a gun, our would-be victims are told the story behind the manor. It seems that twelve years prior, Raymond Garth murdered his family (including his deformed children), and then committed suicide. However, when the police discovered the bodies, they came up one short, mongoloid son Andrew was never accounted for. It is said that he still prowls the estate seeking fresh victims! With no electricity, our intrepid co-eds must also cope with the fraternity president and his sex-kicks conspiring up fake demons and spooks to make sure the pledges fail to stay the night. Garth's story proves to be more than legend, as not infested hands grab victims, proceeding to make mince-meat out of the cast! The movie does spring a final twist upon revealing the mangled marauders responsible for the carnage, in a way that echoes *Just Before Dawn*.

DeSimone fashions an old school haunted house scenario, replete with the wonderful residence (now a museum) standing in for Garth Manor. The basement scenes also lend an air of Gothic sensibilities (especially the cool fiery dinner table set piece complete with decayed and rotted corpses ready for a meal!), and since the "victims" wear costumes, the early '80s fashions aren't prevalent, which helps the movie seem timeless. The movie is a time in reference to gore and nudity, but that isn't a reflection on director DeSimone who was denied the more lurid aspects by the studio big wigs. *Key Deaths*: Cleaver decapitation, 360 degree head twist, impalements, and a shotgun blast to the chest.

## 16 JUST BEFORE DAWN

Just Before Dawn (1981)

Over twenty years before Stan Winston's *Wrong Turn* came along, director Jeff Lieberman's (*Squirm*) pragmatic ribbed slasher title *Just Before Dawn* was filmed deep in Oregon's Silver Falls State Park. This beautifully shot (at





times claustrophobic) movie follows five youths traveling into the woods for a little fun and adventure as they explore a remote part of the mountain land one of them has inherited. After being warned by the forest ranger, Roy McLean (George Kennedy), not to go into the woods, the ignorant group proceed toward their destination. An interestingly odd observation is made by one of the campers along the way, that all the locales seem to have a twin brother or sister (clue). Soon enough they cross paths with the surviving old man seen in the films opening murder sequence, drenching a bottle of booze, and again warning them of the horror that awaits. They simply laugh him off and were continuing on their trip when a large intred mountain man dives onto the back of the vehicle unmolested. The Winnebago trip deep into the mountains ends as the hike to the camp site begins. The group travel deeper into the raw backwoods country before calling it a night. At dark, while partying and being noisy, they receive a late night visit from a ferriy of locales warning them not to awaken the "demons," and to leave right away before it is too late. The following day is the last for many of our young slasher group as their fates apparently become sealed. "Will Anyone Survive Those Hours Just Before Dawn?"

A truly atmospheric film that seems to have slipped through the cracks. Just Before Dawn plays on the conventions of The Texas Chainsaw Massacre with the charm and satting of Deliverance. If there was ever a film intended to effectively scare young campers, this is it. Made all the more hard-hitting by taking a very serious approach to its subject matter rather than tongue-in-cheek. Good character development is given as well as a modest body count and death scenes that do not stray into over-the-top territory, keeping the mood and suspense all that more realistic and palpable. Sadly the current two-disc DVD release from Shrek Show is not the most comprehensive version of the film, with the original Paragon VHS being the most complete of the three versions in existence. *Key Deaths:* Grown machete stab with sawing action, choke-to-death with female fist, and cliff drop drowning.

## 17 Happy Birthday to Me

Happy Birthday to Me (1981)

One of the most serious films presented in this top-twenty list, *Happy Birthday to Me* boasts "one of the most bizarre murders you will ever see," and at the time, they were. Most horror fans will remember one such murder in particular, which was used as the sell image for the movie throughout its release theatrically and on home video that of a young man being skewered through his throat via a shirt-hatbit! The image alone has a place in many a Horrorhound's heart, as so many of us stared at the VHS box insistently throughout the '80s. It is one of the key examples of the amazing self-made movie studios cooked up to help add heat to their films. Unfortunately the marketing department at Columbia-TriStar decided to ignore this classic artwork upon releasing the title onto DVD just a couple years ago, leaving some fans to be unsure of the title's availability (and leaving those who have never seen "Birthday" to think the title featured a possessed teenager

as the primary storyline).

The story of *Birthday* tells of a high school senior, Virginia Wainwright (played by Little House on the Prairie's Melissa Sue Anderson), who survives a freak car accident, suffering memory loss and "blackouts." As Virginia tries to rebuild her life, her friends are beginning to show up murdered (in extremely vicious manners). Is Virginia the next victim, or is she actually the killer? The mystery leads up to the finale climax during Virginia's 18th birthday party, as we celebrate in style, with all the victims in tow, in a grand Chainsaw Massacre homage! *Key Deaths:* Katob-puncture, barbel-smash, throat slasings, stabings, and a motorcycle tie-wrap.

## 18 THE DORM THAT DRIPPED BLOOD

The Dorm That Dripped Blood (1982)

As with many slashers of the early 1980s, this multi-titled title gem from 1981 benefited greatly from the nationwide success of the previous year's *Friday the 13th*, and as a result has developed a decent solid following over the years, due mostly to a pre-stardom role for actress Daphne Zuniga (Spaceballs) as well as some memorable murder-piecepans and the first ever feature film score from composer Christopher Young (Halloween).

Originally known as *Franks*, or *Death Dorm*, *The Dorm That Dripped Blood* follows a series of murders surrounding the dosing of a college dormitory named Morgan Meadows Hall. Led by Joanne (Laura Lipinski), we follow the various exploits of a group of co-eds as they go through the motions of closing down the dorm. There's the standard local wacko (Woody Roll) and the various other stereotypes of the genre. Not surprisingly, as the students begin their work, a marauder killer begins to off them one by one before they can finish their job. What sets "Dorm" apart from its brethren is its solid pace and deftly downbeat ending which reminds one slightly of Scott Spiegel's supermarket slasher *Intruder*. The stalk and slash segments of the picture are also boosted by a welcome touch of heartlessness and cruelty from the filmmakers, including a "boiling water to the face" death that outdoes one seen later in *Sleepaway Camp*. Released to video in the early 1980s on the Media Home Entertainment label, an unauthorized DVD was recently released under the *Pranks* title from Substance Films (a cheap VHS-sourced transfer and a censored version from the United Kingdom). Avoid at all costs. *Key Deaths:* Drilled, boiling water, unexpected incarceration, machete-to-chest with bonus dismemberment!

## 19 the mutilator

Mutilator (1985)

When a boy accidentally offs his mother with a shotgun blast to the back on her dad's birthday, the old man decides to exact his revenge some ten-plus years later on his son who has been invited down to winterize his father's beachside condo. He invites five of his classmates along during

fall break to turn it into a little vacation. When they arrive, the place is in disarray. littered with empty booze bottles. A further tour of the home turns out to one foreshadowing bomb after another with a firing raft, a sacrificial mask, and a missing battle axe painfully discussed at nauseum, all of which come into play shortly thereafter. The kids are picked off one by one in this point-by-numbers, yet seldom seen, southern teen slasher from 1985. Commenting on the cheeseball acting in this or any film of this nature is a waste of print space as everything revolves around creative kills, and *The Mutilator* certainly delivered with some excellent early SPFX work by Mark Shostrom. A guilty pleasure, *The Mutilator* has actually been slated for release sometime in the near future via Code Red DVD (it's currently only available in R0 PAL). *Key Deaths:* Boat motor-to-torso, machete-to-face, decapitation, skull impalement, pitchfork-to-throat, and car-spit.

## 20 SCALPES

Scalps (1983)

This 1983 film slipped in and faded out before the one-sheet was even unfurled. Directed by Fred Olen Ray with a cast of unknowns and a special cameo appearance by Forrest J. Ackerman (*Famous Monsters of Filmland*), *Scalps* begins with an archeology professor rallying up a team to go out into the desert looking for an Indian burial ground. Sighted by the dean, the professor must stay and pushes his team on without him. Once the trek begins, the group encounters several occurrences that begin to drive one team member slowly out of her mind. Upon arriving at the site they find a honey pot of Indian artifacts. Once removed and taken to the campsite, the grill within the burial ground begins to roar its ugly face; fires that burn cold, visions of demons, and hallucinations of men people occur. One by one, the students are taken out in gruesome fashion.

*Scalps* has a gritty atmosphere not seen since *The Hills Have Eyes*. The gore and splatter effects give the movie its own charm with the kills displaying obvious tributes to films like *Maniac* and *Friday the 13th*, yet creating its own mayhem in an original setting unlike half the films of that era.

Released on DVD in '04, *Scalps* finally received uncensored treatment. Most copies released on VHS were heavily edited and were missing a lot of the key scenes. *Key Deaths:* Decapitations, self-throat slasling, scalping, head bashing, arrow-shots, and rifle shot.

Special thanks to all the horror fans who helped create this list based on their love for their particular title!

Articles written by Aaron Crowell (Franks vs. Intruder, Pieces, Don't Go in the House, Alone in the Dark, Just Before Dawn), Nathan Hennessey (Stage Right, April Fool's Day, Happy Birthday to Me, Slasher Night, Larry Near (Madman), Matt Moore (Scalps, The Prey), Joe Kibay (Gunslinger), Kenneth Nelson (My Bloody Valentine, Terror Train), Eric Newkirk (The Burning), Dan Kasania (Hell Night), Michael Berres (The Mutilator), and Michael Felsner (The Dorm That Dripped Blood). Video written by Aaron Crowell and Nathan Hennessey.

## HERBERT WEST MEETS HACK N SLASH!

You have seen him do battle against other horror icons, but this August Herbert West, the Re-Animator, will take part in his first official comic-book crossover beginning in *Hack/Slash* #15 from Devil's Due Publishing! The Tim Seeley-created slasher-slayer Cassie Hack has gone up against hordes of C-list psychos in the pages of *Hack/Slash*, but this August she will meet a legend of horror cinema. In the first ever *Re-Animator* crossover endorsed by filmmaker Brian Yuzna, the mad scientist originally envisioned by H.P. Lovecraft will go toe-to-toe with Cassie and Vlad in a three-issue landmark DDP event. "We're tying Cassie and her dad's history into Herbert West," explains *Hack/Slash* writer and creator Tim Seeley. "It's all tied together, and the origin of Cassie's dad will be revealed in this story."

"I have been working on expanding the *Re-Animator* stories and think that *Hack/Slash* has the right sensibility," says Yuzna. "These guys have really respected the world of Herbert West and *Re-Animator*, and I think we have found a way to integrate it into the *Hack/Slash* environment."

Titled "Cassie and Vlad Meet the Re-Animator," the three-issue story arc will cross over into not only the continuity and origins of *Hack/Slash* characters, but those of Yuzna's *Re-Animator* films as well, representing the first time that Yuzna has officially licensed his work for such a crossover event. "What has drawn me here is that I see the opportunity to tell a lot of those stories that don't quite fit the feature film format, whether by length or tone or just not hitting a mainstream enough audience," Yuzna explains. "There's a lot of freedom in horror comics, and it can be a good way to work out ideas. I get just as excited working on a comic as a movie. This is going to be lots of gooey bloody fun!"

While H.P. Lovecraft's character and exploits exist in public domain, which has allowed other companies to tell tales of the Herbert West character, this will be the first time since the '80s that the Jeffrey Combs's onscreen version of the character will be seen in comic book format.



Having trouble keeping up with the various horror comics being released on a weekly basis? Here is a quick round-up of some key titles to hunt down at your local comic book shop. *Army of Darkness* continues with "Home Sweet Hell" and a Xena crossover, a Marvel Max *Dead of Night* mini-series is now available, as is the beginning of the new *Last Boys* comic series, new installments from the *Friday* the 13th and *Chainsaw Massacre* Wildstorm licenses, plus *Tales* from the *Crypt*, *The Astounding Wolf-Man*, *xxXombies*, *The Living Corpse* and *IDW's* *Zomboid*.

**Also:** Turn to page 41 for a recap of the recently-released *Halloween: Nightdance* comic series and a preview of what to expect next from Myers and Devil's Due Publishing!

# HORROR'S HALLOWEEN GROUNDS

## HALLOWEEN III SEASON OF THE WITCH BY SEAN CLARK

After the success of John Carpenter's *Halloween*, the producers looked to capitalize on their success by exploring "More of the night He came home." Carpenter wasn't interested in continuing the story of Michael Myers, but decided to co-write a script with Debra Hill and come on as a producer. He offered the directing job to *Halloween* editor and production designer Tommy Lee Wallace. Wallace shared Carpenter's opinion that there wasn't much more that could be done with the character or

story, and once the emphasis was placed on upping the blood and less on the story by the studio, Wallace bowed out. After *Halloween II* was a success at the box office, the studio looked into starting *Halloween III*. Again Wallace was offered the directing job, but this time it was different. There was a clean slate and he could do whatever he wanted as long as it was based around the holiday of Halloween. It was decided by Carpenter and Hill that they would continue the *Halloween* series without Michael Myers with a brand new story based around the Halloween holiday. This was a very exciting idea that peaked Wallace's interest.

*Halloween III: Season of the Witch* was filmed in Northern and Southern California in the fall of 1982, over the course of thirty-six days, with a budget of \$2.5 million. The film opens with Harry Grimbridge running down a road away from a freeway overpass. That freeway is the I-5, and he is running towards the junkyard which is located at 14638 San Fernando Road in Sylmar. The opening titles say that this is Northern California, but it is in fact Southern California.



The I-5 freeway overpass as seen in the opening moments of *Halloween III*.



Harry is running towards a junkyard located at 14638 San Fernando Road.

The gas station he runs to is just down the road located at 22124 Sierra Highway in Sylmar. This is where Harry Grimbridge passes out in the arms of the station attendant and where the film's finale takes place as Dr. Challis screams "Stop it!"

The hospital Dr. Challis works at was a small clinic in Pasadena that no longer exists. This was also used for the interior shots of the hospital in *Halloween II*.



The gas station where Harry Grimbridge runs into, located at 22124 Sierra Highway.



The Buccaneer, located at 70 West Sierra Madre Blvd.

Next we head to Sierra Madre, California. This area had some major John Carpenter activity in the 1980s. The cemetery from *Halloween*, the church from *The Fog*, and the town square from *Halloween II* were all filmed in this section of Sierra Madre. We begin at the bar where Ellis Grimbridge finds Dr. Challis losing a few bucks. This is the *Buccaneer*, located at 70 West Sierra Madre Blvd.

As you can see the entrance has been changed, but not much else. All of the



Not much has changed in the *Buccaneer*, here is a shot of murals located on the walls.



The bar, as it was seen in the film, and how it appears today!

*Buccaneer* paintings are still there including the large mural behind the bar. Even the bar stools are the same.

They then leave and go to her father's store. I asked director Tommy Lee Wallace about this location, and he believes it was one of the little shops located in Keresting Court, but the exact location isn't certain.

Next we see Dr. Challis making a phone call to his wife. This is in the town square at Keresting Court in Sierra Madre in between West Sierra Madre Blvd and South Baldwin Avenue. The pay phone is almost in the exact spot where Lance Warlock (the kid with the boom box) bumps into his father Dick Warlock (Michael Myers) in *Halloween II*.



Making a phone call in the town square of Keresting Court. There is no longer a phone.



The television shop, as seen in the film, it has a *Domino's* Pizza.

As the camera pans away from the phone booth, it lands on the front of a television shop, and as the television sets in the window begin to play the Silver Shamrock commercial. Today this store front is home to a *Domino's* Pizza located at 17 Keresting Court.

*Halloween III* pays homage to the original 1955 version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. Coincidentally this very section of Keresting Court was also used in that film when Kevin McCarthy discovers the town's people unloading the pods from the trucks. Now we head about eleven hours away to Northern California to the fictitious town of Santa Mira which in real life is Lodi, California.



The spot where the *Pacific* South West sign once stood.



Rafferty's *Deluxe* gas station located at 2457 Ed River Drive.

Our first stop in Lodi is Rafferty's *Deluxe* gas station located at 2457 Ed River Drive. Just next door is the *Rose of Shannon Motel*. This is no longer a motel, but small apartments located at 2457 Ed River Drive. The rear of the Motel is where Dr. Challis makes his escape.



2457 Del River Drive, the location of the important bits of Shamrock Motel



The room where Ellie and Dr. Chaffin stayed



That is where Tom Affine makes his escape from the back window in the film



A look at the town of Lolo as it appears today with the missing Dublin Inn

Next, we look at a couple of key locations from around town. First is the Dublin Inn which was located at 366 Main Street. Today, there is just an empty lot with a bush covered fence where it once stood. I was told by a local that it had burnt down in the late '80s.



General's bench area on around every corner



The phone booth Dr. Chaffin hides in, next to the Dublin Inn

The phone booth Dr. Chaffin hides in next to the Dublin Inn was still there when I first visited Lolo back in 1996, but is gone today. You can see the Gilded Rose Tavern located at 512 Main Street in the background.



Dr. Chaffin and Ellie drive around the town, which hasn't changed much over the years



The famous Lolo Cheese Factory then and now

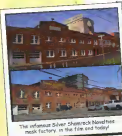
The walkway where one of the assassins watches Dr. Chaffin and Ellie pass by in the car is right next door to Blue Coach Antiques at 364-A Main Street. The store where Dr. Chaffin buys his booze is located at 366 Main Street.

Dr. Chaffin and Ellie park across the street staring at the Silver Shamrock Novelties fac-

tory. Also across the street from the factory is the Lolo Cheese Factory located at 252 Lolo Drive. The Lolo Cheese Factory is currently what the town is known for today. The Lolo Cheese Factory opened just months after filming in late 1982.

Last, but not least, the infamous Silver Shamrock Novelties mask factory, it is actually the Humboldt Creamery located at 281 Lolo Drive.

The dairy industry has always played an important role in the history of Lolo. The Creamery Association in Lolo was established in 1893 as the Diamond Springs Creamery,



The infamous Silver Shamrock Novelties mask factory in the film and today



Main Street Lolo, Idaho

a co-operative of the Golden State Creamery Today, known as a division of the Humboldt Creamery, Lolo's creamery has known several owners, company names, and produced various dairy products. The creamery has known as many as seven names before the Humboldt Creamery Association bought it in the late 1980s. Milk, cheese, condensed milk, butter, casein, and powder ice cream mix are many of the products the creamery has produced over its many years of operation. Probably the most well known product is a powdered milk marketed under the brand name of "Milkman." Milkman is a high quality powdered milk which was developed at the Lolo plant by Golden State in the 1950s and 1960s, and was produced there up until the factory ceased operations in January of 2006. Currently, it only being used for storage for its products made off site.

The interior of the factory was filmed at the old Don Post Studios mask factory in Los Angeles. The exterior rear of the factory is also the rear of the Humboldt Creamery in Lolo. It was very cool to see that the original NO ADMITTANCE lettering was still on the doors of the Final Processing Room.

To the left of the front of the factory is the area where Dr. Chaffin breaks in. This area is fenced off and really overgrown with weeds. The



Ellie's father's car is well guarded



The ad advice lettering from the film on the processing room doors

safety reasons. He said he would be surprised if it wasn't torn down. It would be a sad day for Halloween IV fans if the iconic building that looms large over the small town of Lolo was torn down. Let's hope its historical significance is enough to keep it around for years to come.

awning above the NO 9 DOOR sign is no longer there, nor is the platform Dr. Chaffin was walking on. With the factory ceasing operations after being open over a century, the fate of the building is unknown. I spoke to one of the lone employees working there that day, and he said most of the building is in such disrepair that sections are off limits for



A tour of the "mask factory" in the film, or dairy factory in real life

# DISCLAIMER

Horrormound does not seek to glorify the actions of serial killers or mass murders over the course of these articles. Our only interest is in providing some insight into the public intrigue surrounding the actions of these individuals. Our goal is to provide a history of films based on serial killers as well as the influence they have had on cinema in general. Since the year 2000, biographic style films have been released in mass numbers and frequency, based on some of the most heavily publicized serial killer cases in the United States. Some of these films leave little to the imagination while others just begin to scratch the gritty surface of these morbid true tales.

Hollywood has borrowed many key elements from these real life monsters and the murders they have committed, moving horror away from its science fiction roots and into the realm of reality. Films like *Psycho* (based on serial killer, Ed Gein) ushered in a new style of horror film. *Halloween* and *Scream* now needed to believe that what was happening up on the screen could really happen to them outside the theater. The evolution was inevitable with current events and an ever changing complex world. "You might find yourself conflicted asking, 'Am I sick for watching serial killer films?'" The first television broadcast film to introduce the public to a true serial killer murder case was based on the Manson murders titled *Helter Skelter*. When *Helter Skelter* aired as a two-part television mini-series, in April of 1976 on CBS, it averaged 35.4 ratings/34 share over two nights and is the highest rated two-part movie-for-TV movie ever. *Antisocial* a morbid fascination and curiously was well documented on those two nights. Serial killer movies can work on many levels, some as courtroom dramas, others as some documentaries, and mostly as creepy horror films. Let's now look at our next article to cover these maniacs and the films about and inspired by them.

## SON OF SAM KILLER

BY DAVID KOSANKE



David Richard Berkowitz is perhaps better known to the world as the infamous "Son of Sam" killer who paralyzed New York City for one full year, from July 28th, 1976 to his capture on August 10th, 1977. His crimes were perpetrated by a .44 caliber Charter Arms Bulldog handgun. His choice of weapon also earned him the nickname "44 Caliber Killer." Despite Berkowitz's capture and subsequent confession to the murders (thirteen shot, six dead, and seven wounded), as of 2004, the case was reopened and remains so to this very day.

Like so many other case histories of serial killers, Berkowitz suffered through a rough childhood. Born Richard David Falco in Brooklyn, New York on June 1st, 1953, his parents were Betty Falco and Joseph Kleinman. Betty at the time was married to Tony Falco, but had an affair with Kleinman. After becoming pregnant, Betty went ahead and had Joseph's baby, but listed Tony Falco as the father. This eventually put a strain on young Berkowitz, who was adopted before he was even a week old to a Nathan and Pearl Berkowitz. It was in 1974 that Berkowitz tracked down his mother and found out about his illegitimate birth. At a young age Berkowitz exhibited a fascination with pyromania and theft; his troubles only worsened as time wore on.

On July 29th, 1976 the shootings began. The first two targets of Berkowitz were Donna Laura and Jody Valenti. Laura was killed almost instantly by a handgun concealed in a paper sack. Valenti was struck in the thigh, but survived the attack. The next wave of shootings occurred on October 23rd, 1976. This time a young couple, Carl Denaro and Rosemary Keenan, were the targets. Denaro was struck in the head by a bullet, and Keenan suffered minor injuries from the broken glass caused by the impact of the bullets on their car window. These initial shootings baffled NYPD, and they had no concrete clues or motives to link the two cases. On Saturday, November 26th, 1976, Donna DeMasi and Joanne Lomino were the next to fall prey to the 44 Caliber Killer. Both were shot once, with Lomino becoming paraplegic and DeMasi only suffering minor injuries.

More shootings occurred on January 30th, 1977. Christine Freund and John Diel were shot at while in Diel's Pontiac Firebird. Freund was shot twice and died while Diel suffered minor injuries. By this time, the police were convinced that the 44 caliber incidents were linked, and that the killer, or killers, were targeting women with long dark hair or young couples parked in cars. Virginia Vlaschenchuk was shot to death on March 8th, 1977 and her demise put a new wrinkle into the case. The fact that she was alone was first and foremost, a break in the pattern of the shootings, and the time of the murder, 7:30 pm, was also different, all of the others took place either late at night or in the early morning.

April 17th, 1977 saw the shooting deaths of Alexander Essau and Valentina

Suriani. Both were gunned down while parked in their car in the Bronx. The most curious aspect about these murders was the discovery of a letter by a police officer near the scene of the crime. The letter in question provided police with a name for the shooter the Son of Sam. The letter describes in detail how a monster is born from Sam, who commands to "go out and kill." The letter was addressed to NYPD Captain Joseph Bonelli. A month later, another letter written to columnist Jimmy Breslin of the New York Daily News claimed to be the 44 Caliber Killer. This letter teased the public stating that they haven't seen the last of the killer, "like a spirit roaming the night." While the true author of the piece was never identified, it did appear in the Daily News (minus some text) which subsequently caused a panic. Things were so scattered and chaotic in New York during this time, that women had taken to cutting and dying their hair for fear of being targeted for having long, dark locks.

June 26th, 1977 saw Sal Lupo and Judy Placido struck while in their car by several slugs, but they escaped serious injury. Over a month later, on July 31st, Stacy Moskowitz and Robert Valiente were shot while in Valiente's car. Both suffered shots to the head, with Moskowitz dying from the wounds, and Valiente surviving with a destroyed eye. This shooting was witnessed by several people who identified the shooter driving a yellow Volkswagen Beetle. Ironically none of these accounts led to the capture of the shooter, but it was Cecilia Davis who saw Berkowitz leaning up a parking ticket on his vehicle that spun the wheels in motion. When police investigated Berkowitz's car, they found a duffel bag filled with ammunition, a rifle in the back seat, maps of the crime scenes, and a letter addressed to Sergeant Dowdy of the Omega task force, which was created specifically to catch the 44 Caliber Killer.

Upon his initial arrest, Berkowitz confessed to the killings, yet he also claimed to be part of a Satanic cult which helped carry out the shootings. Berkowitz claimed that the cult had several members based in New York. Journalist Maury Terry investigated these

accusations which led to the case being reopened, first in 1996, and then again in 2004. To date, however, no other individual has been charged in connection with the crimes. To help fuel the fire, Berkowitz himself provided police in North Dakota with clues surrounding the death of Aris Perry, who had been killed on October 12th, 1974 in an unsolved case, claiming the culprit was someone from his alleged cult dubbed "Wanson II."

The most curious item to emerge from Berkowitz's confession was the fact that his neighbor, Sam Carr (the "Sam" mentioned in the letter) had a dog that was





responsible for his murders. According to Berkowitz, the dog was possessed by a demon and commanded that Berkowitz kill. Efforts to kill the dog were allegedly thwarted by supernatural powers!

Berkowitz was sentenced on June 12th, 1978 to six life sentences. While in prison, Berkowitz became a born again Christian and is currently helping other prisoners with spiritual guidance while incarcerated in the Sullivan Correctional Facility in Fallsburg, New York. He is writing a book entitled "Son of Hope: The Prison Journals of David Berkowitz." Since so many other publishers had sought out a deal to publish a book on Berkowitz, this furor caused a New York State law to be enacted, entitled the "Son of Sam Law" which prohibits criminals from profiting from any deals for five years, with

any monies obtained going to the victims.

The Son of Sam case was huge news during 1977, specifically in New York City. The case caught national attention, but when it comes to pop culture, it hasn't registered nearly as high on the radar as other cases. The first notable film dealing with the shootings was *Cut Of the Darkness*, a 1985 telefilm starring Martin Sheen as a detective responsible for capturing Berkowitz. The biggest boost to the story came in 1999 when noted independent filmmaker Spike Lee tackled the tale in his movie *Summer of Sam*. The film is ultimately a misguided mess as the Son of Sam shootings are relegated to the background, while the day to day life of several characters, chief among them played by Mira Sorvino and John Leguizamo, are dealt out with hum drum results. Lee does feature a few dramatic interpretations of the dog barking out orders for Berkowitz to shoot people, but other than that the film fizzles in its

depiction of the .44 Caliber Killer. Incidentally though, Lee may have started a new precedence when it comes to future tales about the crimes.

VH1 premiered a documentary entitled *NY77: The Coolest Year in Hell*, which was a scattershot tale of the various happenings in New York City during the year 1977 which included the Son of Sam killer. Even the sports world was affected by the shootings, as the ESPN mini-series *The Bronx is Burning* testifies when the New York Yankees marched to the World Series that year is met with inner and outer strife. All these incidents seem to make up the whole, with the Son of Sam murders thrown into the mix to paint a portrait of one of the most turbulent years that New York has ever gone through. Whether or not this trend of film focus will continue with the Son of Sam case remains to be seen, but either way its impact cannot be overstated, and the various mysteries surrounding the case only add to the legend, which will probably never grow old and will continue to make people pay attention well into the future.



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# FANTASM

One Brittany Dillon submitted these photos of her friend Stacy Still's extensive horror collection. "Stacy asked me to do this for her because she is not very computer-savvy." Stacy has literally been collecting horror movies and memorabilia since her conception (her mother is an avid horror fan), and now has close to six-hundred movies, hundreds of toys, posters, and autographs! Stacy is also planning to attend Tom Savini's School of Special Effects Makeup next year! Thanks Stacy for getting Brittany to share your collection photos for all of our readers! We urge all horror fans to submit their photos today by e-mailing [mail@horhound.com](mailto:mail@horhound.com)!



## HorrorHound Collector's Spotlight: Stacy Still

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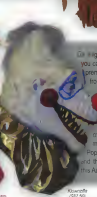
Shipping this August (which is most of the new products featured throughout this article) comes this exciting, officially licensed, Chaney Enterprises' latex mask based on "The Man of 1000 Faces," Lon Chaney, the "Sharp-toothed Devil," as seen in the lost classic *London After Midnight*. This collector's mask will carry a \$59.95 in \$74.95.



Storefront Clown (\$14)



Popcorn Puppet (\$39.95)



Klawns (\$15.95)

On page 10 of this very issue, you can check out not only the premiere Killer Klawns figure from Amok Time, but a brief collection's history - "Killer Klawns meet!" A new chapter in that history continues from this second line of officially licensed Klawns masks from "Bump!" The Popcorn Puppet Klawns and the Storefront Klawns ship this August.



Right Ahead Klawns from the 2007 season. Fellow Storefront and Store!

Also look for Klawns costumes available at the Bump in the Night website!

# CINEMA WASTELAND

APRIL 4TH, 5TH & 6TH, 2008 at the Holiday Inn in Strongsville, OH

Any hardcore horror fan who has yet to take part in a Cinema Wasteland event should look into making a vacation out of the next scheduled show this October! Here is a look at what fans could have witnessed this past April during their special *Asa* and *Spider Baby* reunions! Shown below from left to right: The crew from *XploitedCinema.com* (along with Bill Zebub), *Spider Baby's* Beverly Washburn, Sid Haig, and director Jack Hill, John Morghen with Michael Baronas (Paura), Mark Skole (*Pink Flamingos*), Howard Maurer, Don Edmonds, and Dyanne Thorne (in an exclusive photo first), Artist Jeff Zarnow, Elizabeth Shepherd, and Catrina McCall.

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# NEXT ISSUE

How long have horror fans been praying for special edition DVD releases of such classic film titles as *Pumpkinhead*, *Beetjuice*, and *Child's Play*? How have we longed for first-time releases of such oddball titles as *Mausolium*, *Pieces*, *Student Bodies* or *Sundown*... *The Vampire in Venice*? Next issue, we take a look at the DVD industry to find out what the most deserving horror films not currently available on the market are... and when we may finally be able to find them at retail - if at all! A special guest writer helps us determine how long it could be before we finally see some of these titles at our local video stores!

Speaking of *Pumpkinhead*, the giant vengeance demon turns twenty this year and we have decided to celebrate the title with a special *HorrorHound* retrospective, featuring the history of the film series and tons of pictures showcasing the various pieces of memorabilia and merchandise associated with the film as well as a look into the making of the upcoming special edition DVD!

With the haunting season creeping up on us, *HorrorHound* recounts last year's tour of America's greatest haunted attractions to help give you, the readers, a comprehensive list of the greatest hot spots around the country: Universal Orlando, Knott's Berry Farm in California, etc... check back next issue for our complete coverage of "where to scare" this fall!

*Pumpkinhead* isn't the only retrospective planned for celebration next issue, as *HorrorHound*'s own Paul Davis presents a special look at the anniversary of Michael Jackson's *Thriller*. The music video that helped bring zombies into the mainstream - we take a look back at the Vincent Price rap, the Rick Baker werewolf transformation, and the zombie dance you will never forget!

What else can you find in *HorrorHound* this August? Our regular feature articles, such as toy news, *Horror's Hallowed Grounds*, *GoreHound* and the *Serial Killer* series! Fall is coming, which means big horror titles! A new *Saw* film? You bet! Plus *Twilight*, *Quarantine*, *Jor*, *Death Race*, and much more!



Want to have your company's products featured in the pages of *HorrorHound*? Contact us via e-mail at [mail@horrorhound.com](mailto:mail@horrorhound.com) or check out our website at [www.horrorhound.com](http://www.horrorhound.com) for more information. We urge you to let us know what we may be missing. Fans can contact us about news as well - and send us letters, questions, comments, and content. Show your dedication to the horror community by submitting your original art, custom memorabilia, stories, tattoos, etc...

## HORROR Convention Calendar

### WonderFest

July 19 thru 20th, 2008  
Louisville, KY  
The Executive West  
(featuring Cortlandt Hall, Linda Cherry Hill, NJ, Crown Plaza Hotel, (featuring Robert England)

### Monster Mania Con

August 22 thru 24th, 2008  
Cherry Hill, NJ  
Crown Plaza Hotel  
(featuring Robert England)

### Rue Morgue Festival of Fear

August 22 thru 24th, 2008  
Toronto, Canada  
Metro Toronto Convention Centre  
(featuring Wes Craven, Ruggero Deodato and many more)

### HorrorHound Weekend, Indy

August 29 thru 31st, 2008  
Indianapolis, IN  
The Marriott East  
(featuring Joe Dante, Dick Miller, Jeffrey Combs and many more)

### The Scare Fest

September 12 thru 14th, 2008  
Lexington, KY  
Lexington Convention Center  
(featuring Tom Towles, a Friday the 13th reunion and many more)

### Cinema Wasteland

October 3 thru 5th, 2008  
Cleveland, OH  
Holiday Inn Select  
(featuring Lamberto Bava, John Saxon and many more)

### Rock & Shock

October 10 thru 12th, 2008  
Worcester, MA  
The Palladium  
(featuring Rowdy Roddy Piper, Jason Mewes and many more)

### ScreamFest

October 17 thru 19th, 2008  
Orlando, FL  
Wyndham Resort  
(featuring Malcolm McDowell, Ruzza Balk and many more)

### HorrorHound Weekend, Detroit

October 24 thru 26th, 2008  
Ypsilanti, MI  
Ann Arbor Marriott  
(featuring Sid Haig, Tom Atkins and many more)

### 30 Years of Terror

October 31 thru Nov 2nd, 2008  
Pasadena, CA  
Sheraton Pasadena Hotel  
(featuring Dick Warlock, Lance Guest, Will Sandie, Greg Nicotero, Stacey Nelkin and many more)

### Crypticon Minneapolis

November 14 thru 16th, 2008  
Roseville, MN  
The Radisson  
(featuring Tom Savini and many more)

\*see next issue for more show listings.

Have a show you would like to promote in the pages of *HorrorHound*? Contact us via e-mail at [mail@horrorhound.com](mailto:mail@horrorhound.com).

# HORRORHOUND HALL OF FAME MARTIN

Following in the paw prints of such amazing cinematic masterpieces as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *The Howling*, *Fright Night*, *Shawn of the Dead*, *The Lost Boys*, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, *The Thing*, and *The Wolf Man*—the HorrorHound Hall of Fame now adds George Romero's often overlooked vampire masterpiece: *Martin* to its ranks!

George Romero is a household name for horror fans the world over, mostly thanks to his creation of the zombie subgenre. Released in 1968, *Night of the Living Dead* was one of the scariest films of its time. George took ten years to follow-up his undead opus with *Dawn of the Dead*, a blood-soaked commentary on commerce that hit a mark on many a horror fan, who to this day, consider it to be the best film Romero has lensed. *Day of the Dead* was followed (and in this writer's opinion, happens to be Romero's best of the "Dead"), but failed to hit at the box office upon its release. Forty years after the original, George is still at it, releasing more Dead films, but we wanted to take a step back—return to the beginning—and give praise to possibly his most underappreciated title: *Martin*!

*Martin* tells the story of a young man who travels by train from Indianapolis to Pittsburgh to meet and stay with his stem uncle, Tads. Upon meeting, his uncle acts awkward towards him, ordering "young" Martin to behave, not to converse with his cousin Christina (a young woman played by Christine Forrest who lives in the same house), and to not kill anyone from their neighborhood. Martin

is called Nosferatu by his uncle and is mentally abused with waving crosses shoved in his face, hanging garlic, and other assorted anti-vampire relics shown about the home. An exorcism is even eventually attempted. Martin may not be a vampire, but he is a murderer, as the film's opening takes no time to reveal. He awkwardly drugs, rapes, and kills a young woman while traveling via train to his destination in Pittsburgh, slaying the murder as a suicide. Martin is a kind and gentle looking soul, but he no doubt is a sick and malicious killer.

One of the greatest accomplishments of the film is that the movie creates a dilemma for the viewer and is able to keep them teetering between belief and dismissal of the vampiric curse that revolves around the plot. Martin is tormented by his uncle, who

(just like his family) have "convinced" him that he is Nosferatu, a vampire. At times, as the viewer, you discard the claim as ridiculous. They surely have brainwashed this kid into thinking he is an 85-year-old vampire, and that his soul is in mortal danger! While you know this is insane, the movie features full-on attacks on men and women alike, as Martin kills for blood, "for sustenance so it seems and to stop his 'shakes'." So is he a vampire or not? The situation is exacerbated thanks to Martin's own "confessions" to a local radio station that he is indeed a vampire. He does claim to be 85, while at the same time trying to convince his uncle that his "magic" isn't real. "There's no real magic ever," Garlic, crosses, and all the normal vampire rules don't apply, furthering Martin's manic confusion as to his own state in this world. Romero contributes further to said confusion with his storytelling, cutting away to Victorian-esque black-and-white flashbacks that may or may not reveal Martin's true age (or agelessness)—the flashbacks haunt Martin and may not actually be a truthful encounter of his own life. Is it a fantasy world he created for himself of how he is supposed to behave? To claim the flashbacks have any stake in a time-period would be far-fetched, as mass-crowds with torches are shown, candelabras, old time cars, etc.—the flashbacks do more to confuse the viewer than help confirm Martin's vampiric origins. By the end of the film, none of this matters as Martin is tragically murdered by his uncle for a crime he had not committed. Another trick on the audience, as you are left gasping in anger and

disbelief while forgetting that Martin was still a cold-hearted rapist and murderer. As quickly as the final act of death is shown on-screen, the curtain is pulled and the film leaves with an imprint of amazement and question-marks.

Martin is sadly often left off many a movie-goer's list of great films, and while a compelling argument could be conformed by the flaws seen within the film, it shouldn't dismiss the factors that make this movie one of HorrorHound's Hall of Fame inductions. Martin has an amazing story, is well acted, and was led with amazing conviction by star John Ampos. You feel for the characters and are appalled by their actions at the same time. You never know what is real and is not, and you often forget that the title character's actions should condemn him. We recently talked to John Ampos himself about his thoughts on the film and its induction into the HorrorHound Hall of Fame to which he replied, "First and foremost, it's George's best film. I'm both surprised and gratified by its longevity and status in the genre. It speaks very highly of George's genius, and the fans taste." While George Romero may be forever remembered by his Dead series, it is films such as *Martin* where he truly showed style and his range as a director. 🐾



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